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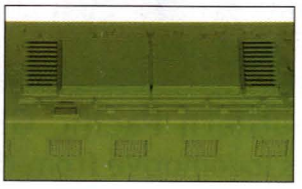

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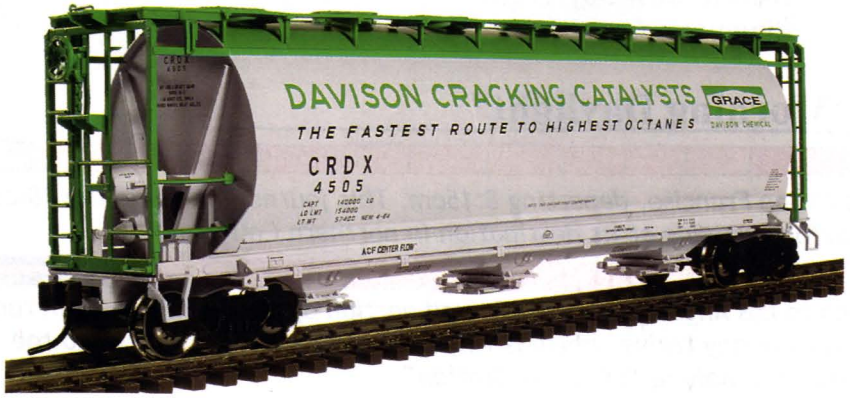

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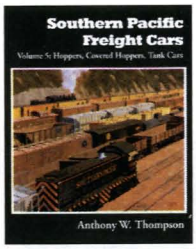

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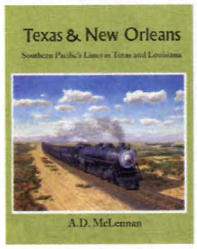

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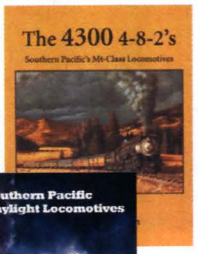

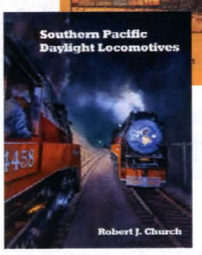

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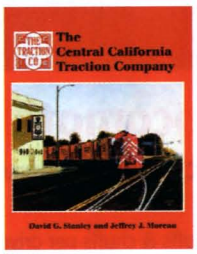

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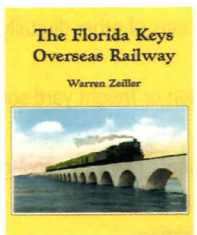

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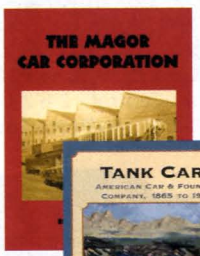

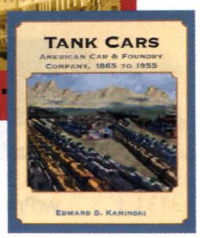

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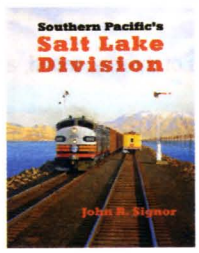

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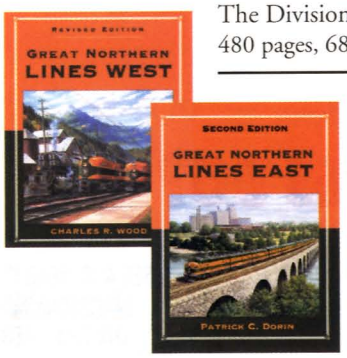

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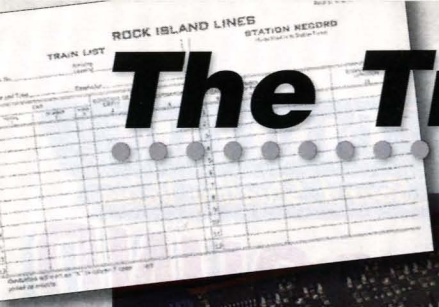

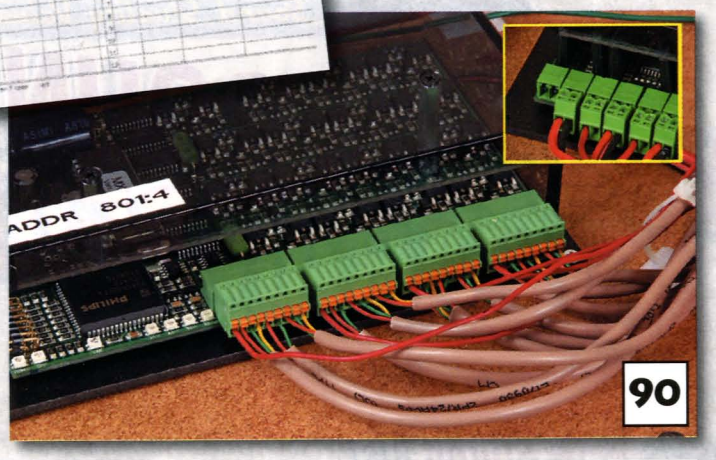

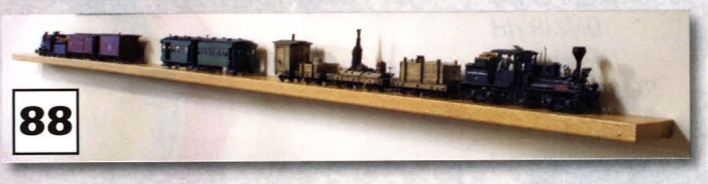

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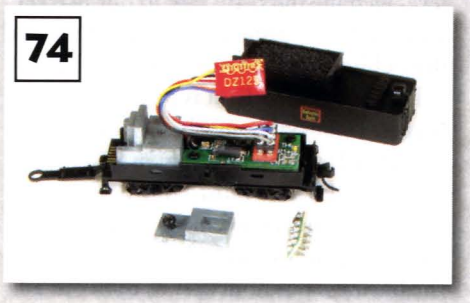

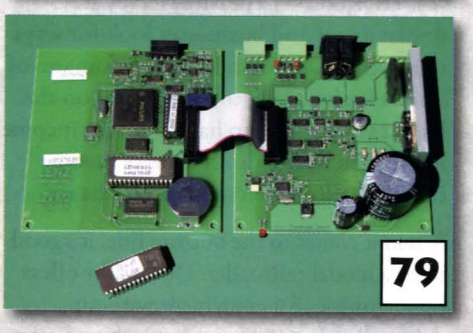

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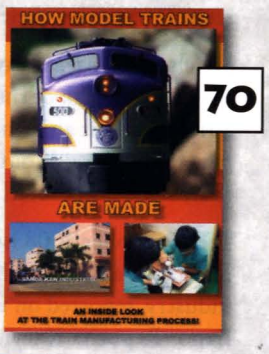

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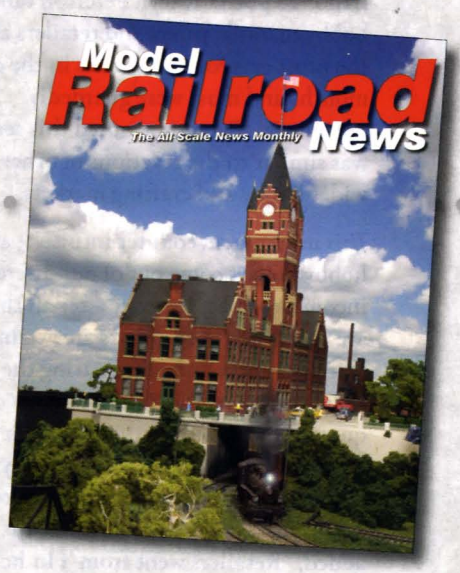


Editorial

Good times in hard times

Since the implosion of the financial markets last fall, we've been seeing one disaster piled on another. Huge investment firms and more than a hundred banks failed in 2008. Trillions of dollars in wealth evaporated as the Dow Jones dropped more than a third of its value. Once-safe retirements have become marginal as 401(k) and other investments took major hits. The freezing of credit, which is the primary reason the Detroit automakers had to ask for a bailout, has strangled many businesses and it's estimated that thousands more enterprises, from manufacturers to retail shops and restaurants, will close in 2009.

The turmoil is by no means limited to the American, or even the Western, economy: Japan is in its own recession and the Chinese juggernaut has been dealt several setbacks. In the same time period that American employers cut about two million jobs, *ten* million Chinese workers have lost their jobs as thousands of factories have closed. The situation could get ugly as the U.S. and China, two nations that depend on each other, take steps to shore up their own economies.

So where does that leave model railroaders in our little neck of the economic woods? Surprisingly, it appears the hobby market may be able to ride out the storm better than some other retail segments.

The November 2008 issue of *Playthings* magazine, a trade publication for the toy industry, reported on the sold-out iHobby Expo. Reporter Karyn Peterson talked to hobby manufacturers and retailers about the prospects for hobby sales in the coming months and most were guardedly optimistic. *Playthings* noted this sentiment was similar to the reactions of others in the wider hobby and crafting markets.

This might seem counter-intuitive; after all, hobby dollars come out of our discretionary income, the part left over after all the bills are paid, and those dollars are getting tight. Just look at the spending during the recent holiday season. The *Wall Street Journal* quoted Mary Delik, a director with consulting firm Deloitte LLP, as saying 2008 will go down as "one of the worst holiday sales seasons on record." Ms. Delik added, "Retailers went from 'Ho-ho' to 'Uh-oh' to 'Oh-no.'"

Fortunately for us, the hobby business is somewhat recession-proof. In tough times, people will tend to stay home and turn to activities that give them some enjoyment, especially if the cost of participation isn't too high. Crafts and hobbies are perfect for this.

Before anyone rushes to write me about how expensive model railroading is, take a moment to consider your options. Yes, a DCC-equipped locomotive can run into the hundreds of dollars, but there are many, many things that cost far less while still giving you hours of pleasurable hobby time and improving your layout. To get some ideas, invest fifteen bucks in a **Walthers** catalog: I don't know about you, but it's easy for me to spend a fair amount of time going through the phone-book-sized catalog and I get a multitude of fresh ideas. Or spend a little on gas, which, adjusted for inflation, is about the same price as it was in 1970, and visit your favorite hobby shop.

Scenery products, an **Athearn** Blue Box kit or an unpainted **Promotex** tractor are all among the things you can get for little more than the price of a combo meal at one of the fast food emporia. **Model Power**, **Atlas,** and others have reasonably priced structure kits. To save even more, pick up some **Northeastern Scale Lumber** or **Evergreen Styrene** and try your hand at scratch-building. Every layout can use more figures and a big box of **Preiser** unpainted figures retails at about $36.00 for as many as 120 figures. (Just a reminder: an entire year of *Model Railroad News* is just $29.95.)

In fact, it's items like these that are the secret to the hobby market's ability to weather the storms that roil our economy now and again. Across the industry, from crafting to collectibles to model railroading and plastic kits, sales of big-ticket items are softening while sales of lower-priced products that require some time and effort to complete are rising or steady. Some retailers report they have seen an increase in floor traffic that has made up for the lower dollar value of the average transaction.

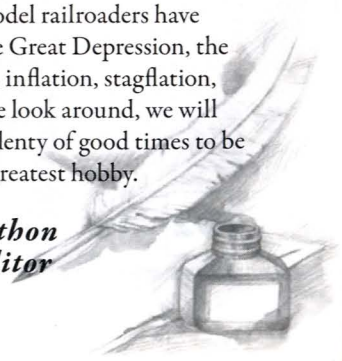
Michael Myers, owner of a **HobbyTown USA** in Murfreesboro, Tennessee, told *Playthings* his train business was quite healthy but said, "My transaction count is up significantly, but unfortunately, the dollar amount per transaction is down. We are seeing people spending time looking and shopping, and buying less expensive things."

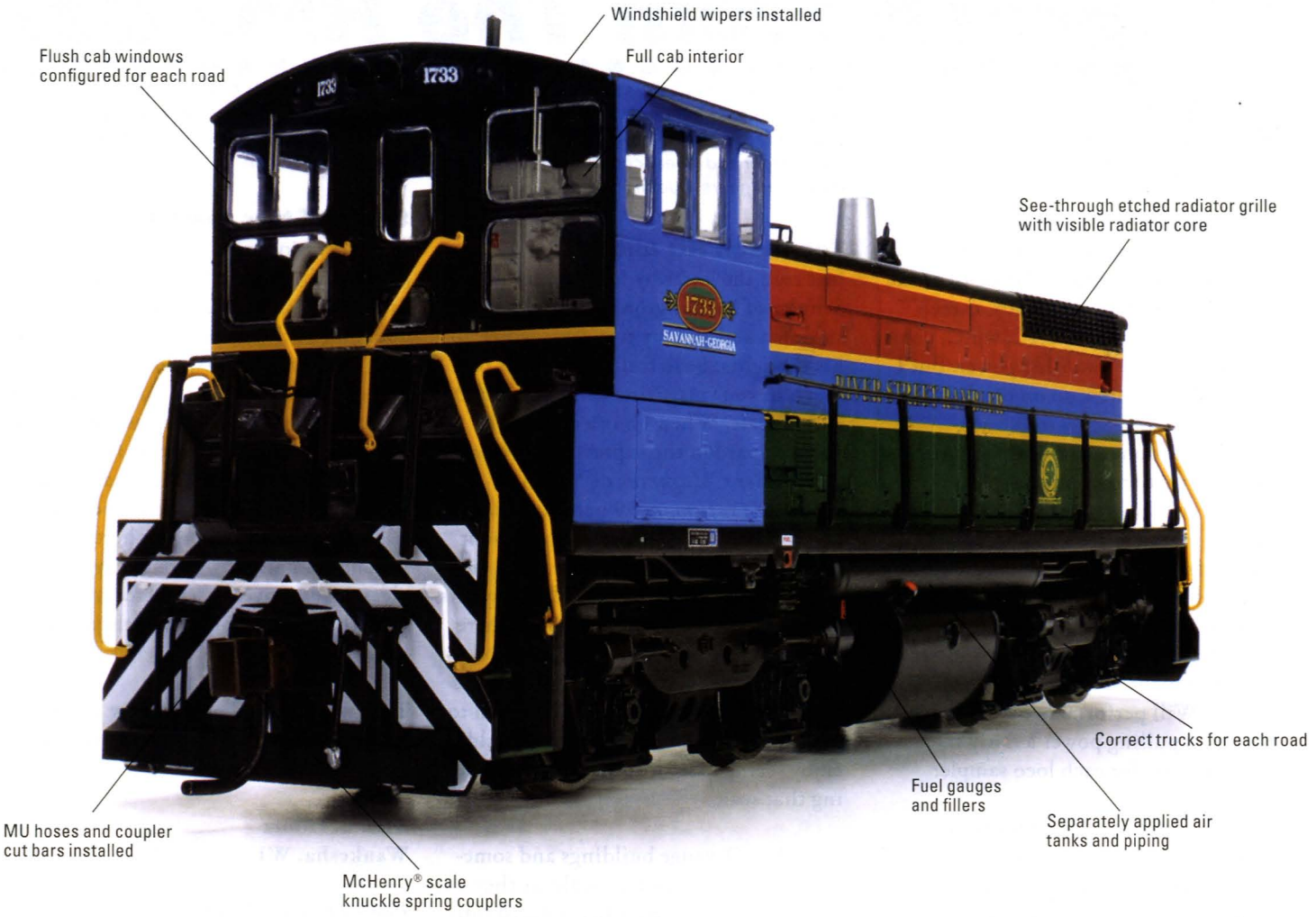
As we view the carnage on Wall Street, we have another reason to be grateful for our niche status in the consumer products world. The excesses of big business, like too-rapid expansions, price bubbles, and leveraged buyouts, are rare in our market and arcane instruments like collateralized debt obligations are non-existent. The collapse of **Sanda Kan** is probably the biggest financial bombshell to hit the model railroading industry in quite a while and I have a hunch one of the major causes was the involvement of some financial geniuses who didn't understand the business but nonetheless took out a lot of debt to acquire the company and then gutted what made it valuable to achieve their profit goals.

Of course, the future is anything but certain and the same seers who did such a swell job forecasting the Crash of 2008 tell us the economy could be in bad shape through the rest of this year. The hobby industry still depends on many types of credit and if the credit markets don't begin to loosen up, there could be some serious problems as cash reserves are drawn down and businesses look for ways to increase their cash flow. The tsunami of layoffs is also going to take its toll on the business; you have to have a decent income before you have a discretionary income that will allow even modest purchases.

When it comes to the bottom line, it's good to be a model railroader. Our hobby offers opportunities for enjoyment without demanding large amounts of cash and offers retailers opportunities for sales in lean times. Over the many decades since the hobby was born, model railroaders have made it through the Great Depression, the Second World War, inflation, stagflation, and recessions. If we look around, we will find there are still plenty of good times to be had in the world's greatest hobby.

— By Bill Cawthon
Managing Editor

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Fresh From The RPO Car

Kato Dash-9 Review

Enjoyed the Kato review and agree that these are superb models. I own 10 of the older Dash-9s, two AC4400s, three SD90s and one SD70MAC, which comprise most of my mainline power. But I would like to follow up on one item.

Has anyone done any research on the variables that create pulling power? Here we have two locomotives with the same weight, motor, gearboxes and trucks/wheelsets, out of the same production run, and yet their pulling power varies by more than one ounce. Why? Are there steps that an owner can take to increase the pull weight of a lower-performing engine? Will performance change over time or is pulling power a fairly fixed characteristic for each loco sample?

Possible variations are motor smoothness, gear mesh and friction, wheel tread plating, squareness of the truck so that all six wheels fit firmly on the track, flywheel balance, friction in the driveshafts, and probably others. Perhaps a detailed comparison of these two models could give a clue.

I'd love to see your magazine or someone else follow through on these questions. If there are answers that can increase pull power within the capability of a model owner, the research could benefit the entire hobby.

Roger Thomas
West Windsor, NJ

Good questions, Roger. I'm sure all of that has been investigated by the engineers, but it all boils down to cost benefit analysis. All the components that make up the drive system work very well when each one is an optimal example. When, as a collection, they get sufficiently out at the edge of the tolerances, you can get a model that performs poorly. How much would you pay on the locomotive cost to have the manufacturer enforce tighter tolerances in order to get better performance?

I have found that most models speed up on the top end gradually over an hour of operation and then settle in, meaning they need to wear in the gears and such. At the end, however, pulling power is more about loco weight and wheel composition than the motor and gears. –John

Too much HO and N?

Just read the letter by Mr. Edmund Schultz of Farmington, MN and had to sit down and add my two cents worth to his thoughts. I too feel that there is too much in your magazine concerning HO and N scale. When I buy a copy of (if you will pardon the expression) *Model Railroader Magazine* or Model *Railroad Craftsman*, 99 percent of the information contained therein is about HO or N scale. Now, I realize there are many model railroaders who have layouts in those scales, especially HO but there are also many model railroaders who have S, O, and G gauges in their garages basements, and train rooms. I happen to own a huge S-scale railroad and would enjoy seeing more information concerning that scale.

I also buy O-gauge buildings and sometimes accessories in that scale, as they work nicely in S scale when worked into the scenery. I hardly ever see anything reviewed in S scale except in your S Curves column, and that only comes out every other magazine. That is my favorite part of the magazine and I read that before anything else. I did, however, enjoy your article on the American Models 4-8-4 Northern locomotive a while back and would like to see more news concerning the scale I model in.

Bill Jones
Salem, IL

No way around it, Bill. HO and N are the dominant scales in model railroading in terms of both overall sales and individual units sold. In our case, we try to cover all the relevant releases that manufacturers will send to us. As you might guess, we get more HO and N than all the others. O and garden scales come next. If we got more S, we'd cover more S. Same with Z. We can't cover what we don't have.

That being said, we have recently been reviewing a lot more S items. Please see Grand River Models' Grocery Kit (Jan 09), Smokey Mountain Model Works flat car kit and Pine Canyon's Professional Building kit (Nov 08), and Smokey Mountain Model Works Ventilated Boxcar kit (Sept 08), to name a few. –John

Seeing Stars, part 1

A quiet session with my copy of *A Century of Southern Pacific Steam Locomotives* shows stars appearing on just about all of the classes. I found them on Moguls, Ten wheelers, Consolidations, Mikes, Pacifics, Atlantics, ACs including an AC-1 on pictures taken as far back as 1918. They mostly appear on freshly shopped locomotives which makes me think they were more in evidence on passenger power, which got better grooming! I also saw enough photos of clean locomotives to lend credence to your theory that sometimes the stencils did not come out.

That was fun, and now I know another reason why we buy all those books...so we can win arguments!

Alan E. Houtz
Waukesha, WI

Thank you, Alan. As one of my writers, I'm glad you set me straight. I never guessed the stars on the ends of the axles on SP steam locomotives would generate so much interest. Wow! Read on... -John

Seeing Stars, part 2

The stars on various Southern Pacific steam locomotives were not placed on a whim. They denoted that the bearings on the axle with the wheel with the star were lubricated by spring-pad lubricators rather than by oil soaked "waste."

The system was developed by Southern Pacific using a Nathan type DV-7 mechanical lubricator operated by a link in which oil was steadily fed to each driving box where it was distributed through tubes into a groove in back of the center of the crown of the bearing.

In the case of the AC's, the time needed without the spring-pad system took about 2 hours 40 minutes to repack the sixteen driving boxes. With the spring-pad system, the filling of all the spring-pad cellars (reservoirs) took only 15 minutes and could be done in that time

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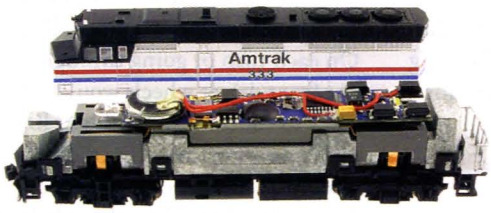
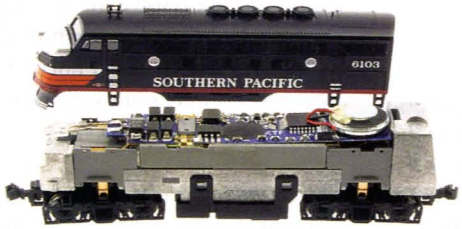


0001658 N Scale Drop-in sound decoder for Kato "F" series
FEATURES 4 Prime Mover sounds, 34 horns, 8 bells



0001644 N Scale Drop-in sound decoder for Kato SD70MAC/AC4400
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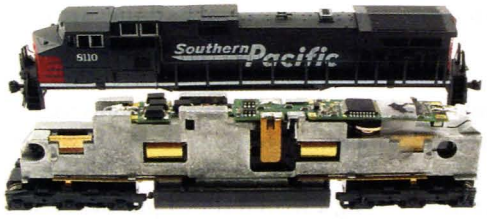

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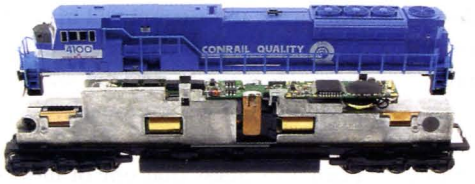

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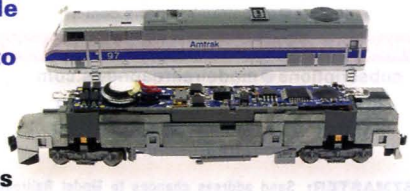

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with one man doing the job.

Some of the AC's had this system on all axles. It appears, however that only drivers with this system got stars.

The two members of the GS-5 class did not wear stars. They were roller bearing equipped and had a circle of white dots on the wheels of those drivers.

David Longshore
Apple Valley, CA

Seeing Stars, part 3

I did some research on the stars painted on SP locomotives and have found the following:

In 1911, engines receiving grease packing lubrication received a star painted at the end of each driving wheel axle, according to Dr. Church in his book *Southern Pacific Daylight Locomotives*. Many photos of SP engines during that time period support this. Once the fleet of engines was completely so fitted, the stars were no longer painted on the driving wheels, and photos shot later on show few stars on the axle ends.

In 1937 and 1939, George McCormick, General Superintendent of Motive Power for the SP took out patents for his invention of spring pad lubrication. Cotton fibers wicked up oil from a specially built oil reservoir, and fed it to the axle bearings. When tested, bearings ran far cooler with this system than with the previous grease packing, and Dr. Church indicates that the tests revealed that spring pad lubrication gave results similar to roller bearings at speeds over 1 m.p.h.

The SP began installing spring pad lubrication on engines including the GS4. Engines so fitted were marked with a star a the end of each driving axle. The GS5 engines received a ring of small dots (a lot like a ball bearing race) because that engine class was fitted with roller bearings. By around 1950, the practice of painting stars ceased generally, although some locomotives went to the scrapper in the late '50s with their stars clearly seen. For a whole lot more information, please see Mr. Church's *Daylight Locomotives* book.

Victor Roseman
Brooklyn, NY

While we're on GS-4s

I just read the letter from Joe Loggans and his problems with the MTH GS-4. I recently bought the WP GS-6 version of this locomotive and a club member had bought two of this model. We both had the same tracking problems that Joe talked about. On each turn or going through a turnout the front driver wheels would ride up and want to continue in a straight line. Our club minimum mainline radius is approximately 30 inches so this was a big problem. The engine shorted on about half of the club mainline turnouts. My first thought was that there wasn't enough weight on the front of the engine. However, adding extra weight did not resolve the problem. As we carefully looked at the engine when it was sitting on a flat surface, I noticed that the front wheels were not touching the surface but were slightly elevated.

The next step was to remove the brake assembly from the bottom of the engine as if we were going to change the traction tires. Instructions for this are in the manual that comes with this engine. With the brake assembly removed, the driver axles and bushings are exposed. I carefully lifted, then reset each set of wheels, making sure that they seated correctly and the bushings were even with the bottom of the chassis. After checking each bushing for correct seating a second time I put the brake assembly back on. Next, I put the engine on a flat surface. All drive wheels were now touching the flat surface. I put it on the track and ran it through all of our mainline turns and turnouts. This time there were no shorts and only one or two occasions when the front drive wheels appeared to not track properly.

I can only guess that one or more of the drive axles and or bushings were not seated correctly from the factory.

Al Cuevas
San Marcos, CA

Thanks, Al; you've done us all a great service. I inspected mine and all four drive axles sit down properly, so apparently I got a good one. I haven't yet gotten a reply from MTH, but the important thing is we are now empowered by knowledge to deal with the situation ourselves. –John

Setting the record straight on S

Reader Lew Powell responded to Roy

Hoffman's last S Curves column with the following observations:

"All the phases of S scale ... are confusing to those of us who have had many gauges and scales and even dabbled in the full size rail-fan equipment... I've tried to get my S-scale layout going for these last six years or so. Some stumbling blocks:

1. It isn't easy to buy AF or S-scale stuff.

2. AC vs. DC is always a question and concern.

3. DCC is somewhat confusing for us guys who had simple O27 or HO sets in the '40s and '50s.

4. S-scale or AF Clubs are few and far between.

5. Every Model RR show features HO, mostly.

6. Walthers' monthly mailing has less than one page of S scale items.

7. "High Rail" vs. "Scale" are terms used to further confuse little ol' me.

8. If I run an AC engine on DC, will it burn out, and vice versa?"

My February 2009 "S Curves" column contains my views on this potentially confusing subject. That said, let me answer Lew's questions specifically.

1. S-scalers have learned to purchase "at a distance." There is an excellent "S Scale Model Railroading" Internet resource that catalogs and illustrates nearly everything available in S except Lionel/ American Flyer. It's at www.trainweb.org/crocon/sscale.html. Additionally, many S vendors have their own catalogs. Particularly useful are the catalogs from S Helper Service and American Models, as they display a wide variety of locomotives, cars, and other equipment.

2. There is no good reason to go with AC power. Some will tell you that you need AC locomotives for factory-installed sound. Well, sort of. Most DC locomotives will not have sound. However, S Helper Service and American Models DC locos are substantially less expensive than their AC versions, and installation of DCC decoders can give you back that sound.

3. Installing DCC on your layout is actually less complex than installing straight DC. No special block wiring is necessary; just a heavy-gauge dual bus (ordinary Romex house wire will do) with feeders to your track every six feet or so.

4. Yes, there are few S-scale clubs, if you don't count S narrow gauge (Sn3). The highest concentrations of S people occur in the Northeast, Midwest, and California. There are a LOT of Sn3 people, perhaps ten or twenty times as many as S standard gaugers. You can meet a lot of S and Sn3 people online by joining one or more of the Yahoo groups (http://groups.yahoo.com/) dedicated to these interests. If you don't have a computer, join the National Association of S Gaugers (NASG), care of Stan Furmanak, NASG Membership Chair, P.O. Box 32, Annville, PA 17003, or join online at http://www.nasg.org/joining_1.html. The NASG publishes a bimonthly magazine that includes a once-a-year special issue containing the names and contact information for some 1,900 S people as well as clubs around the US and elsewhere.

5. I can't help you with the absence of S at local train shows. Usually any participation is by volunteers from the local area, so here's your chance to do some promotion. The NASG will furnish promotional materials for such shows.

6. Don't rely on Walthers for S equipment. Instead, use the resources cited in #1 above.

7. "Hirail" is an S- and O-specific term that connotes wheel and track compatibility with American Flyer (S) or Lionel (O) rolling stock. Unless you have American Flyer equipment that you feel you must be able to run on your layout, stay away from hirail. Hirail equipment is incompatible with NMRA interoperability standards, so if you opt for it you will not be able to take advantage of the widening range of S-scale NMRA-standard equipment, such as brass imports, American-made kits of the sort manufactured by Smoky Mountain Model Works, and nice flextrack products offered by at least three vendors.

Because of the hirail presence in S, the term "scale" also has an S-specific connotation: "not hirail."

8. If you run an AC engine on DC it will perform normally. But if you try to run a DC engine on AC, it will just sit there and hum as it rapidly becomes permanently damaged.

The bottom line is that hirail is a major confusion factor in S. If you have no

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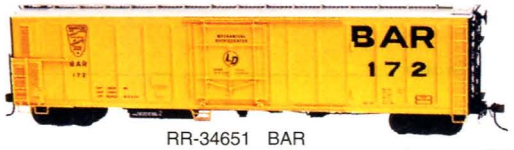

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Richard Karnes
S-curves columnist for *MRN*

Atlas N-scale train sets

I was reading your write-up of the Atlas N-scale Trainman train set and you said that you cannot recollect the existence of Atlas train sets in N scale. In the seventies (about 1972-1974), I bought two Atlas train sets. Each had a Plymouth diesel, two or three cars, a caboose, track, and a power pack. I paid $12.95 each on special. I also have a catalog from America's Hobby Center NY from the late 1960s or early 1970s and it has nine Atlas sets in it with 3 of them passenger sets.

Lyle Stern
Lisbon, ND

Dear Lyle, first let me say, WOW! I'm impressed that you still have these sets after all these years. For the longest time I had an engine and a few cars from the 1970s, but even those are gone from my collection by this time. Secondly, thanks for pointing out that Atlas did offer train sets at one time. Based on your dates I was just starting sixth grade, having moved from New Jersey to Missouri (my Dad's job location changed). With all the craziness of moving and starting at a new school, we hadn't had a chance to find a train shop — I didn't even subscribe to any train magazines yet. I do remember getting interested in Estes Rockets, building and flying quite a few of them, so trains probably took a back seat for a little while. I was also running HO scale at that time and bought quite a bit of it. So I'm not surprised that I missed those Atlas N sets.

If you have a chance to buy a train set for yourself, grandchild, etc., check out the Atlas N-scale Trainman sets. They really offer a high-quality train set, one that will last for years to come. –Phil

Joys quite apart from DCC

I was taken aback by your statement in the first paragraph in the December Thinking Of DCC column. You can expect a DCC revolution. I am one of those in S who is converting vintage and current equipment to DCC. One dealer is installing DCC in vintage operating cars. Imagine being able to deliver your gravel, coal, mail, logs, or vehicles anywhere on your layout. DCC just expands the "joys quite apart from DCC" that you are talking about. DCC is a valuable addition to the world of hi-rail and scale modeling.

While DCC isn't operating around the Christmas Tree, my Lenz system is in the basement.

Alan Udy
Idaho Falls, ID

You're right, Alan, and I'm always expecting a DCC revolution! I just don't always know the details. For example, I'm unsure how DCC works with hi-rail because that's usually AC power. I suppose there are methods for converting a hi-rail loco to DC power so a DCC decoder can power it. I have a very lovely scale S locomotive from S Helper Service that has an NMRA 8-pin socket, just waiting for my choice of decoders, including a possible sound version. I'd love to have an article in Thinking of DCC about how to convert a delivery car to DCC so you can just poke a function button and it unloads. How cool would that be! –John

DCC and Hexadecimal

Just read all the letters in the December 2008 issue, and wanted to add this observation: I have never programmed a decoder in hexadecimal! Although I

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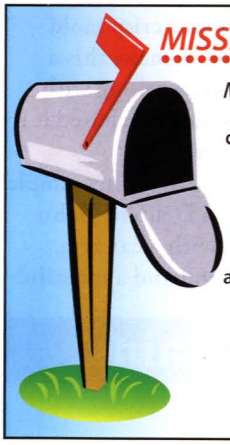
have a degree in Computer Science, and can count in both octal and hex, I've never needed it to program CV's. Why? Because I use my PC and a software program called PR-1, which provides a very nice user interface and lets me put in regular old numbers, draw speed curves, etc. Plus, it works with all brands of decoders, even sound. There are at least two other software programs of this type on the market, but I've not tried them. Who says decoder programming can't be easy?

Ernie Carlson
Zigzag, OR

Who says that, Ernie? Not me! I worked with hex back in the day but then I went Mac, and I've never gone back. If you've been following our Thinking of DCC starting in January 2009, we've been looking into JMRI, which includes Decoder Pro, a software application that lets you manage decoders in your locomotives. This has really changed my whole decoder programming act. No more note cards, and I am using more of each decoder's potential. -John

Correction: On page 34 of the January issue we inadvertantly announced Atlas' new Dash 8-40CW as being an HO model. It is an N-scale item.



MISSING AN ISSUE?

Model Railroad News is scheduled to be delivered the 1st week of the cover date. *"We do not pre-date our covers."*

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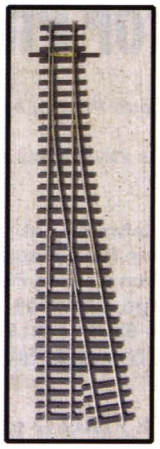

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REVIEW **Large** (1/22.5)

High Horse European Electric is a big hit for Piko

Review and Photos by John Sipple

G Taurus electric locomotive, MSRP: $484.99

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By-The-Numbers

Siemens Taurus
Piko
LSG 1:22.5 • Type: Electric
Traction Tires? No

Pull Power (Ozs @ Full Slip)

Pull	÷	Loco Wt	=	Efficiency
49		146		33.6%

Volts	Amps
18	2.8

Analog DC

Start Volts = 5.9

Volts	Amps	Scale MPH
6	0.4	3.1
12	0.9	27.7
18	1.8	45.7

THE PIKO G-scale Taurus is ready to run in your garden wearing any of these paint schemes: BR 182, Siemens Dispolok, 1116 ÖBB, Hupac, and DHL.

Siemens' ES 64 U2 "Taurus"

In Europe, trains run under wire far more places than in North America. While some of that is due to the differences in operating concepts, much of it is really a matter of choice. Take the Taurus for example. Rated at 6,400 Kilowatts, this translates to 8,583 Horsepower, making it vastly more powerful than any single diesel or steam locomotive in operation right now on North American rails.

The "ES" stands for "Euro Sprinter," the 64 is for the hundreds of kilowatts of power, the "U" is for Universal (as opposed to being freight or passenger specific), and the "2" is for the number of electric power types the machine will accept. Versions can be produced that will accept all four of the power types used in European railroading.

The Universal version differs from the Freight in the shape of the nose shell. While the Freight has sharper, boxier corners, the Universal is more rounded. The two power types the U2 accepts are 15 and 25 kV AC; the other two power types used in Europe are 1.5 and 3.0 kV DC. The Taurus is clearly a flexible, all-around performer.

Amtrak enjoys eight thousand horsepower locomotives for its high-speed passenger trains, but the application of high horse electrics to current North American freight is quite limited. Black Mesa & Lake Powell has nine 6,000 horse units, Deseret Power Ry has three, Iowa Traction has three antiques, and that's about it for electric freight haulers on this continent. It isn't that we can't; it's just that we don't. Variants of the Taurus have found their way around the world to Denmark, Greece, China, Korea, and Spain. If a railroad wanted to adopt electric under-wire operations, it's nice to know there is a production locomotive that is ready to go.

Piko's Taurus

This was a rare treat for me, to get into a locomotive from a new manufacturer and also have a chance to dig into a European prototype. This is a gorgeous model with very crisp mold work. Siemens wanted to make this a very visible locomotive, working with the various railroads that purchased it to make them very eye catching.

In the case of this review, our sample is of a Class BR 182, a Deutche Bahn electric locomotives with a canary yellow nose on each end and a metallic

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The six car version of the Famous Japanese "Blue Trains," is from ProZ. Pulled by the EF 65 electric locomotive, operation is smooth in all speeds. This train was a sleeper that traveled the length of Japan. All cars are lighted, also headlights and taillights.

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The big picture here is a handsome locomotive by any standards. While it would be tempting to dismiss it as an inverted bathtub with windows and wheels, this is really a very sophisticated design that gives the machine good airflow properties and a pleasing appearance.

gray in between. The Taurus has a cab at each end, eliminating locomotive turning. While not a prototype that drips with detail, we have separately applied hand grabs, roof panels, windshield wipers, and a buffer assembly. This is a G- (1:22.5) scale model and it conforms very well to published specifications on the Taurus.

Perhaps the most fascination to the eye is the power pick-up system. The chromed-plastic upper pantographs attracts your eye first. If released, it raises, though it really doesn't pick up electricity. The red single arm raises from the pantograph platform that is interconnected by a red bus line that ties the two pantographs together. They all sit upon brown insulators. While it might be fun to operate your Taurus with the pantograph up, I would take care that it doesn't hit overhead objects before putting the throttle all the way open.

Our loco is number 048, a locomotive that joined a group of others to lead the Bosporus run into Eastern Europe. In October 2005, it was modified to meet signaling and other needs for this service, continuing that way until February 2006, when it was restored to Western European work and was renumbered as 060. Not only were the side logos noticeably different, the post conversion loco sprouted a third pantograph. Thus our version represents 048 before its renumbering. This loco was delivered new from Siemens during July 2004, so that sets the model's range from mid-2004 to early 2006. Thus, while I saw an example of this machine at the station in Nürnberg in early 2004, it most certainly wasn't DB 048.

Lettering, both large and small is razor sharp and perfectly readable. On the side is "www.dispolok.com," a locomotive leasing company founded by loco-builder Seimens. That company was developed to meet the needs of "liberalized" railroads on the Continent. Basically, the tracks are governmentally owned, operated, and maintained in each nation, but the trains are run according to private shipping contracts, so any shipper with the requisite licenses can rent or lease or buy one or more locomotives and operate their own trains using licensed engineers. Dispolok (the "lok" is for "lokomotive") owns a very large fleet of locos and makes them available on terms that could be for a single day on through several years.

Operation

This locomotive arrives as a straight DC model, without DCC or sound built in, but it does have the capability to be upgraded with either one. Piko markets both the G Digitalkit and the G Soundkit. The Soundkit is both a sound system and a standard DCC decoder, and the kit comes with a speaker that will fit into the sound box in the "possum belly"

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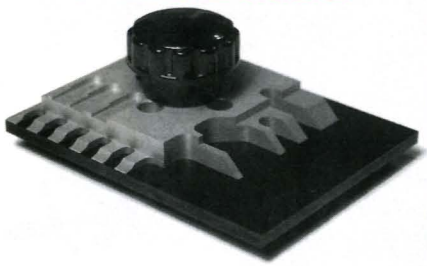
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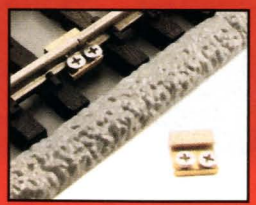
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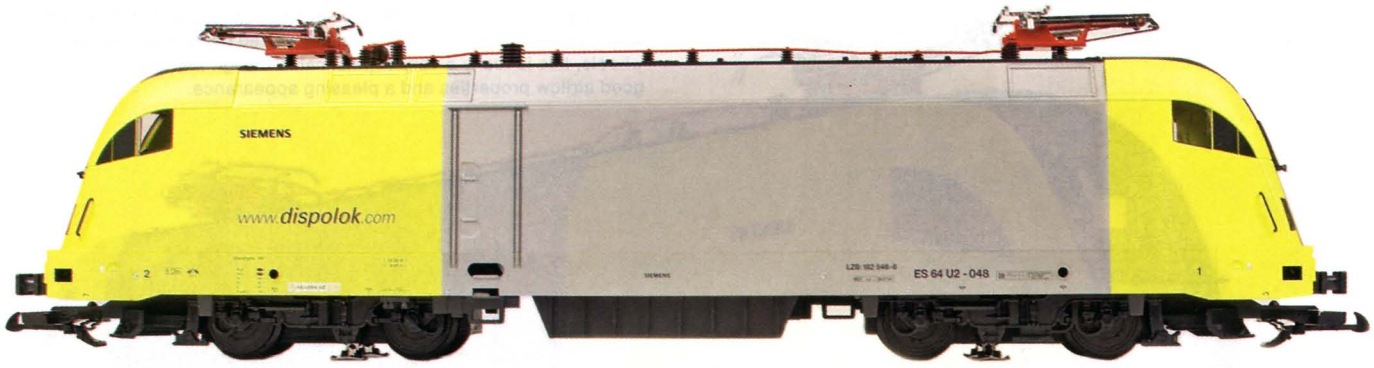
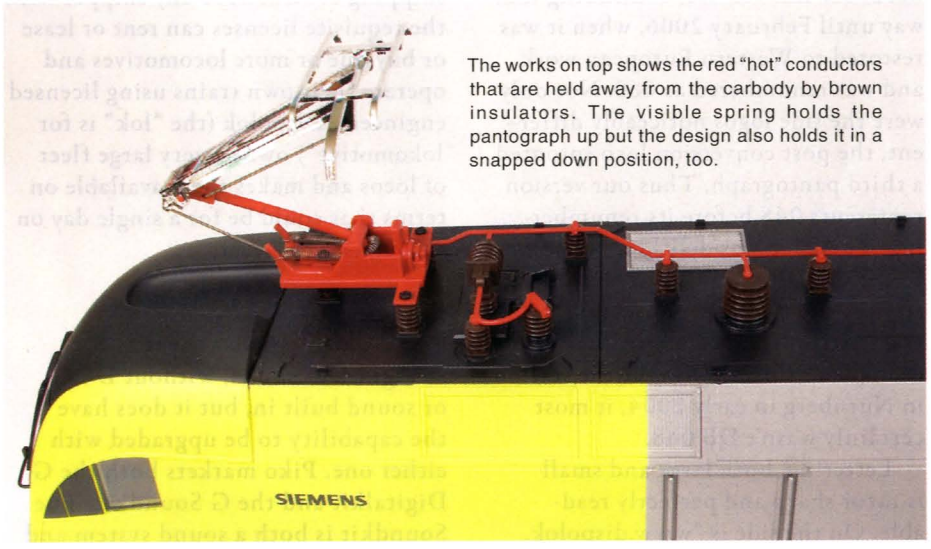


If you turned this locomotive around, it would look just the same, except that the "1" end would be to the left. The simple exterior is a testament to clever design on Siemens' part. This loco is equally likely to haul passengers or freight.

of the model. F5 and F6 give bell and horn sounds, F2 turns the motor sound on and off, F7 gives an uncoupling or door warning sound, and F8 is the standard mute function.

The locomotive features a turning radius of 600 mm, that being just under two feet or a track diameter of four feet. To facilitate this tight turning, the loco uses truck-mounted hook-and-loop couplers, an older standard of couplers for Large Scale trains. If you decided to convert the machine to North American service, you could remove the buffers by unscrewing their plate. Then you can replace the factory coupler with Kadee 831 truck-mount couplers or some other brand, if you prefer.

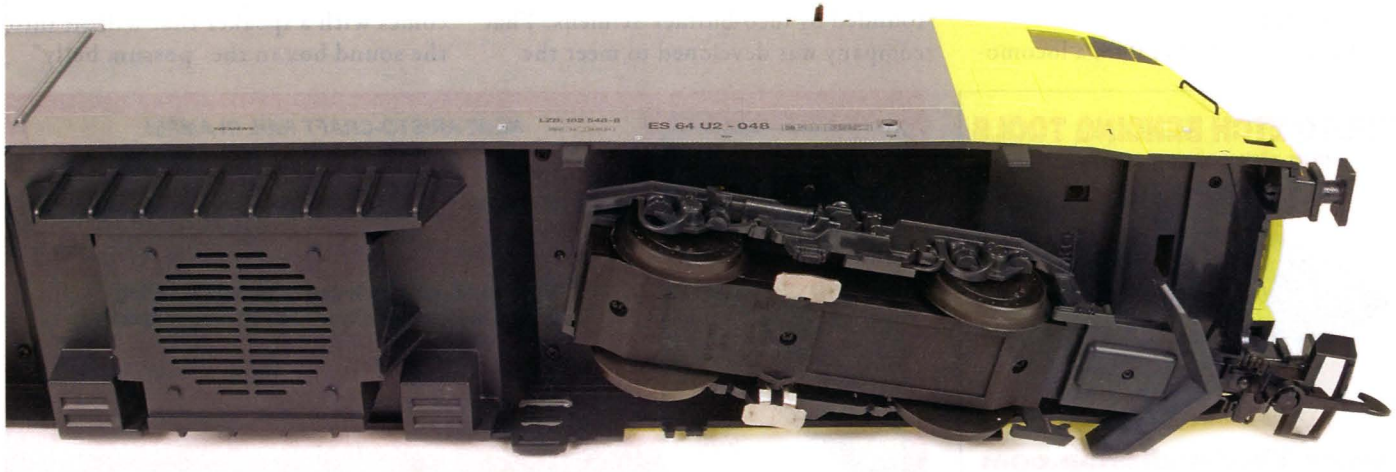
The hook-and-loop does not really represent any world prototype coupler, though it is closest to the "chopper" on which the loops overlap each other, and the hook faces downward. That type of coupler is used up in Scandinavia and in a few places elsewhere. European freight trains most often use the three-link with a "tommy-bar" used to tighten it up. Other types of couplers are used on passenger equipment.



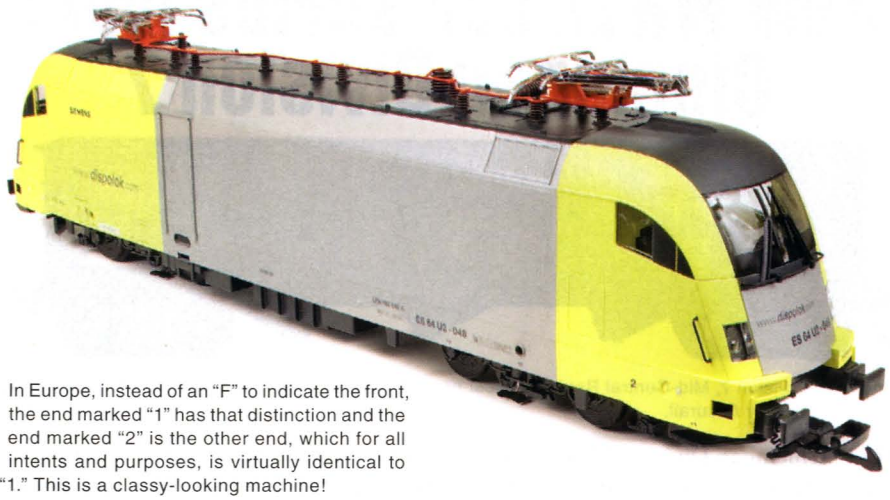
The works on top shows the red "hot" conductors that are held away from the carbody by brown insulators. The visible spring holds the pantograph up but the design also holds it in a snapped down position, too.

I set up our review sample with the #1 end equipped for North American service and tied onto an 18 foot (5.5 meter) train, running it on the Pine Belt's ten foot (3,048 mm) curves and curve-adjusted five percent grades. This loco doesn't have traction tires, and so it has superlative electrical pickup, but it did want to slip a bit, though not much or enough to cause a stall. The Taurus pulled this heavy train at speed and with good authority.

This is a quiet runner and a smooth operator. I controlled the train with an Aristo-Craft Train Engineer, using both the Linear and the PWC settings. The loco ran about the same, either way. It starts at 3.5 volts, moving quickly to 7.2 scale miles per hour



Beneath it all is a well-designed and quiet truck, and each one has its own motor. To improve power pickup, the locomotive has sliders, as is the case with most European-made locos. The large speaker box is very obvious from underneath. Piko also offers a separate sound kit.



In Europe, instead of an "F" to indicate the front, the end marked "1" has that distinction and the end marked "2" is the other end, which for all intents and purposes, is virtually identical to "1." This is a classy-looking machine!

and then reached 48 smph at 18 VDC. This is very respectable and consistent with other models of modern locomotives.

Summary

Piko may not be a brand that is familiar to you, but it is highly respected in Europe. Distribution in the United States and the rest of North America has been consolidated under Silvergate Distributors, and that should make Piko train products easier for modelers to get. Here at *MRN*, we've found that there is a respectable interest in models based on European prototypes, both old and new. This Siemens Taurus is a very good example of this. You don't have to be a European modeler to have such a model on your layout. My Pine Belt Railroad is experimenting with service under wire, and a leased Taurus gets regular train duty around here. It helps me vision what could be!

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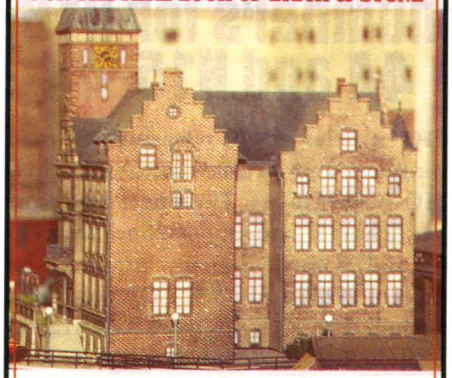

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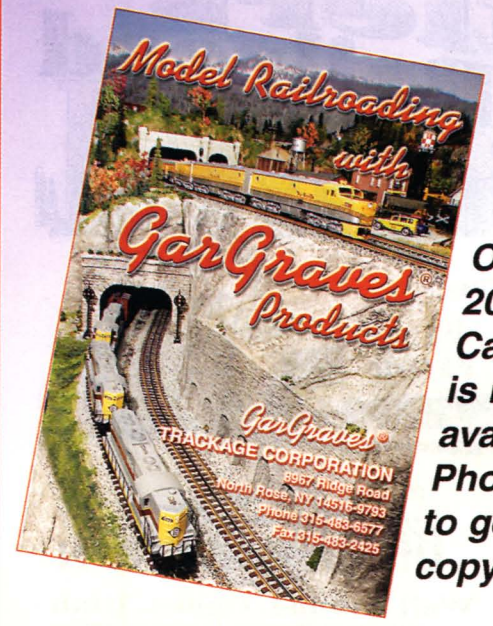

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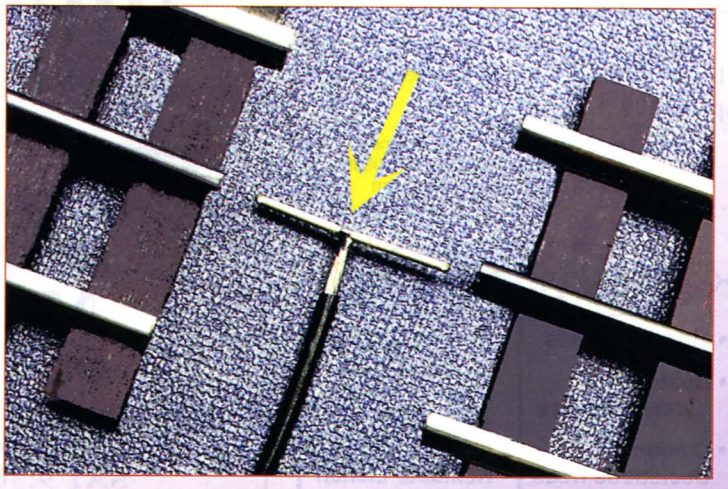

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Atlas to release new road numbers for H16-44 and H15-44

HO — Atlas will be releasing new road-numbers and paint schemes for their HO-scale H16-44. The model represents the "Phase I" body style of both the H15-44 and H16-44 that was produced between 1947 and 1952. Options will include FM or AAR truck side frames, high or low-mounted headlights, early or late-production phase 1 hoods, and a removable fuel tank skirt.

The new H16-44 roadnumbers will be available for the following: Akron Canton & Youngstown (yellow/black/silver) #201 and #202, as well as undecorated.

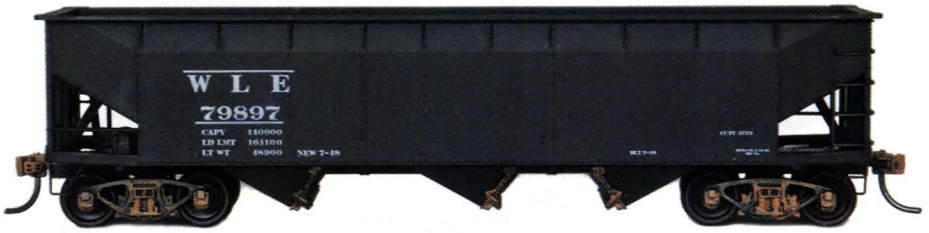
The new H15-44 paint schemes include Kansas City Southern (black/white) #40 and #41, and Jersey Central with CRR Co. Herald (green/yellow) #1501 and #1503.

New H16-44 paint schemes include: undecorated; New Haven (green/orange "full balloon") #597 and #598; B&O (Blue/yellow) 6700 – #6701; Erie Lackawanna (black/yellow "Lackawanna) #1930, #1932, and #1935; and Milwaukee Road (black/orange) #402, #404, and #406.

The locomotives will retail for $169.95. The estimated delivery date is April 2009.

Atlas Model Railroad Co., 378 Florence Ave, Hillside, NJ 07205-1102; 908-687-0880; Fax: 908-687-8857; www.atlasrr.com

New W&LE car series from Cincinnati Division 7



Cincinnati Division 7, Mid-Central Region's latest project includes this 70 ton, offset-side, triple hopper, custom painted by Accurail.

HO — Cincinnati Division 7, Mid-Central Region, of the NMRA, has announced their latest car project, a 70 ton, offset-side, triple hopper. The hopper was custom painted by Accurail for the Wheeling & Lake Erie Railway, which was controlled by the Nickel Plate Road after December 1949. According to the company, the hoppers are prototypically correct, and are available in four numbers. Accurail also has renumbering decals available for this W&LE car series, making it possible to have twelve additional roadnumbers.

The group states that their profits are used to provide donations of books on model railroading to public libraries, and to support the Boy Scouts' Railroading merit badge sessions, which Division 7 conducts annually.

Single cars retail for $15.00 each, with a four-car set for $56.00. Shipping via priority mail is $5.00 for one car, and $6.00 for two to four cars. Ohio residents must include sales tax of 6.5% on the total, including shipping charge. Orders should be sent to "Cincinnati Division 7, MCR, NMRA, P.O. Box 62501, Cincinnati, OH 45241."

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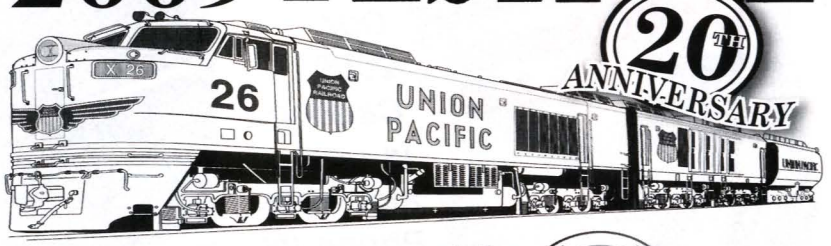

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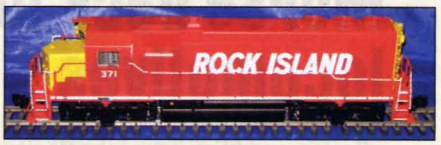

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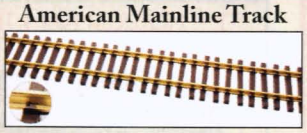

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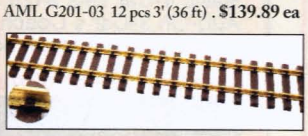

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REVIEW HO

Walthers brings Fairbanks-Morse back to locomotives

Review and Photos by John Sipple

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FOR their first release, Walthers is offering the H-10-44 with both Sound/DC/DCC and Standard DC version in the following roadnames: Santa Fe, B&O, C&NW, C of NJ, Milwaukee, Nickel Plate, NYC (P&LE), Pennsy, D&RGW, N&W, UP, Monon, Penn Central, Frisco, P&LE, and an undecorated version. In many cases, there are two roadnumbers for a railroad in each power option, giving the buyer up to four roadnumbers for a given paint scheme. Search the Walthers' web site at www.Walthers.com for all the details.

By-The-Numbers

H-10-44
Proto 2000
HO 1:87 • Type: Diesel
Traction Tires? No

Pull Power (Ozs @ Full Slip)

Pull	÷ Loco Wt	= Efficiency
1.9	9.4	20.2%
Volts	Amps	
16	0.3	

Analog DC

Start Volts = 10.5

Volts	Amps	Scale MPH
10.6	0.11	1
13.0	0.15	28
16.0	0.17	78

DCC

Stall Amps: (if applicable)

Speed	Step (of 128)	Scale MPH
Min	1	1
Mid	63	51
Top	126	102

Fairbanks-Morse and the remarkable Opposed Piston (OP) engine

Okay, let's get right on it. Try to imagine an old flathead straight six engine without the head attached. The top of the engine is flat and the cylinders are open with the pistons at various positions inside of them. Now take another engine just like it, with the head also removed, and turn it upside down, placing it so the cylinders line up. Got that picture in your mind? That's an opposed piston (OP) engine. Obviously, the OP has some complications not found in your old flathead straight six (or eight or ten), but it possesses some huge advantages, too.

First, the OP, when set-up properly, runs very smoothly and with far less noise. Since noise is the sound of inefficiency, the OP is actually more efficient and does produce more horsepower for the same displacement and weight. It is, of course, taller and heavier but not as much so as you might suspect. The standard bore and stroke of the F-M OP was 8-1/8 by 10 inches. However, that ten-inch stroke was divided equally between both halves of the engine, and so each crankshaft only had to push its piston 5 inches. Both cranks were geared together and so the pistons on the same cylinder would come together at the same time and then hit the bottom of their stokes at the same time, too. However, each piston did half the traveling.

Being a two-cycle, it had no cams or valves, using ports at the bottom of the stroke for exhaust and intake. In the case of the F-M OP, the upper engine handled the intake air, blown in with the help of a supercharger. The lower engine let out the exhaust with scaveng-

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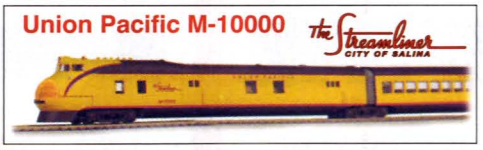
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With the tall opposed-piston engine, a low hood wasn't an option. Side vents allowed the loco to breathe easier than a front-mounted radiator. At this point in time, no MU equipment had been installed.

ing help from the push-in air on the top. The diesel fuel was injected at the same moment the pistons both came together with the air at full compression.

Thus, our straight six engine had 12 pistons. They also had twelve sets of rings, 12 wrist pins, 12 connecting rods, and so on. Unlike the V-models from EMD and others that had sleeves and pistons with individual heads, all of which could be removed as an entire Power Assembly, the F-M OP had to be completely disassembled. While this was acceptable inside of submarines for which the engine was originally designed, it was a big headache when working on the railroad. OP-powered locomotives numbered 1,460 units before the last were delivered in 1963. Many were repowered with other engines and others were scrapped prematurely.

Why? The rattly-bangy world of railroads challenged every design of every single thing used on every locomotive or car. A submarine was a far more cushioned environment, even with hard surfacing and depth charges. The engines stymied some mechanics, and so they were more popular where there was also a surfeit of returning submariners who would bring their experience to the loco shops. Small wonder they were so popular in coastal regions and up around the Great Lakes. Few who ever heard them in operation ever forgot the unique sound that was more like an inline aircraft engine than a high-cube diesel.

Walthers' H-10-44

Fairbanks-Morse started off naming its models starting with the letter "H" for a hood design. After that came the two most significant digits in the horsepower rating followed by the number of axles under the loco and the number of motors. Thus, the H-10-44 was a hood unit, 1,000 horsepower, with four axles in two trucks and the loco had four motors, one on each axle. This particular model would be built from August 1944 to April 1950, when it was superceded by a 1,200 horse version. Increasing horsepower was as simple as going from a top engine speed of 800 RPM to 850; no distinguishable outer changes were made until 1952.

The great designer, Raymond Loewy, had a hand in the design of this lowly switcher. A full-height hood was necessary to house the OP engine, but he added grace notes to the score. All the corners were rounded gently, the front nose panel was slightly sloped, a curved plate made the transition from the cab side to the top of the battery box, and the cab had an overhang. This overhang

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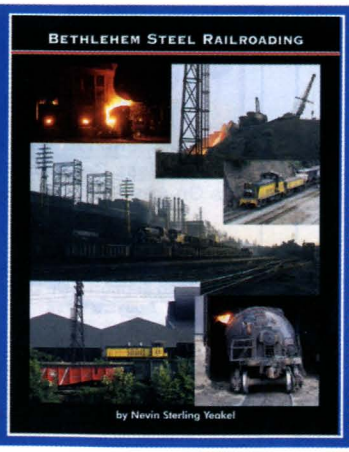

Features 70 photos (37 color and 33 b/w). Many of these are seldom seen views taken inside the plant. PB&NE, LV, RDG, D&H, CR, BSCO Narrow Gauge and other private Bethlehem Steel equipment are shown, including hot metal cars, cinder pots and heavy-duty flatcars with loads.
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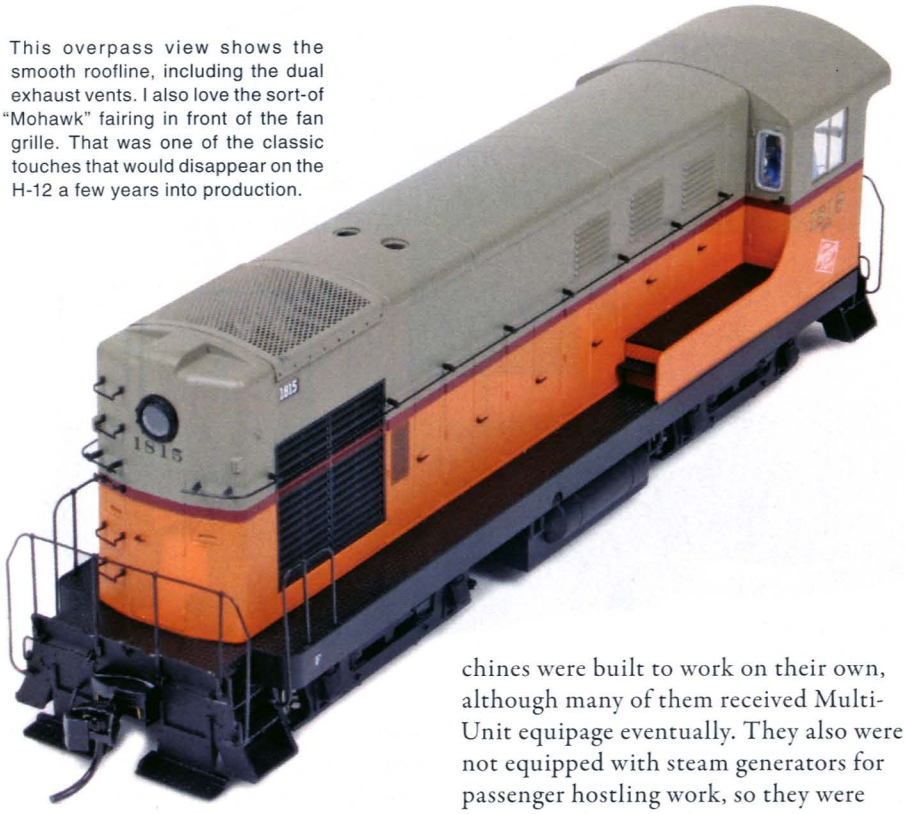

This overpass view shows the smooth roofline, including the dual exhaust vents. I also love the sort-of "Mohawk" fairing in front of the fan grille. That was one of the classic touches that would disappear on the H-12 a few years into production.

is significant because it was the most observable detail to go in 1952, so all of our H-10-44s had the Loewy design. And our model from Walthers has all of that, as well.

Fairbanks-Morse used a fair amount of off-the-shelf technology in its locomotives. Not visible on the outside were the Westinghouse and GE electrical components, plus some built by them. When Westinghouse withdrew from the locomotive market in 1953, F-M replaced those components with equipment from GE or of their own design, the customers' choice. The H-10-44 was equipped with standard AAR type A yard trucks, typical of switchers of the day. It didn't receive MU plumbing since these machines were built to work on their own, although many of them received Multi-Unit equipage eventually. They also were not equipped with steam generators for passenger hostling work, so they were mostly for freight only.

Of the 187 F-M diesels that went to the Milwaukee Road, 23 of them were H-10-44 units, first numbered from 1802 to 1825 but renumbered later into 760 to 783. Built during the full range of production from 1944 to 1950, they all left the roster between 1978 and 1980. The latter-day H-12s left as early as 1976 but a few endured to 1983. Most of them wore their bells on the front of the nose panel and had "flower box" cab windows for winter weather. Some of them had canvas sunshades, and a few had both. Several had quick-start canvas drapes for their air intake shutters, usually rolled up on the top of the side grille. Some had the horn atop the cab and others wore it just in front of the engineer's front window. Many of them sported firecracker antennae. Over the years, many of the details changed, so expect to do some model work if you want something other than an as-built H-10-44.

I have seen photos of early units with fresh paint and especially the medium gray that would be replaced with black, over time. There is no bell on the nose or any of the rest of that. You can trick out your ride with all that stuff if you wish, but this is an excellent starting point. The paint is glorious and perfectly masked. The Milwaukee paint job is a rather minimalist effort when compared to the multi-colored and ornate designs of the day. Still, it is very exacting and this Proto 2000 model has risen to the occasion.

All of the handrails and other general details are already installed. The windows are nicely glazed and the stainless steel trim around the cab windows is very nicely done. The number boards on the front sides of the hood employ white numbers that are easy to read even with the power off, a prototypical touch. The cab is even somewhat detailed inside. The single "blat" horn is located on the side of the hood, just ahead of the cab windshield on the right side. I also enjoy the top view, including the top radiator panel that models the row of rivets on each side. The grille and fan beneath are awesome.

In a world of locomotives with protruding stacks, the H-10-44s had no stack at all! There are just two holes in the roof, venting the exhaust from the bottom engine block on both sides. Probably a fair number of H-10 owners will put some carbon black weathering around these ports. There are also some detail parts in a small bag, but Walthers

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doesn't describe their use or placement. After a number of years of use, many of the H-10-44 prototypes began to sprout short, stubby stacks to get the exhaust above the roof sheets.

Our sample is Milwaukee number 1815 which would later be renumbered to 773. It weighed 244,000 pounds and should have been good for around 61,000 pounds of starting tractive effort. It was serial number 10L114, built in January 1949; it was retired from the roster and scrapped in 1978 after 29 years of service. The serial number tells us this was a Phase 2, since the Phase 1s wore numbers starting with the L. Then the 10 (for 1,000 hp) started the Phase 2 before the H-12-44 came along with a starting number of 12. In the case of 1815, it was a Phase 2B.

So what are the obvious spotting signs for the Phase 2? Back from the large radiator side vents is a small, vertical grille that replaces two rows of louvers in the earlier models. The Phase 1s had lots of groups of little louvers all over the hood while the Phase 2s had large louvers in the upper gray band. The Phase 2As had six sets of these dominantly large louvers while the 2Bs had just three, back toward the cab. Based on the information on the parts breakdown, Walthers has a nose shell for both 2A and 2B. This first run is all 2Bs, leading us all to the question, "2B or not 2B?"

The locomotive's length was around 48-feet 10-inches, as reflected in the model. The rest of the locomotive's measurements are consistent with publishing drawings, and this loco was similar in dimensions to Baldwin's VO1000, though I think the H-10-44 is more attractive, in large part due to the cab roof overhang.

Walthers has done an excellent job of portraying the cab end and its overhang. The light is bright and casts a fairly good beam in the dark. There are figures in the cab and cab details in light gray styrene. Go ahead; get inside and give it some paint detail.

Operation

I really like this little guy! Right out of the box, it's ready to go, and so long as you're happy with Address 03, you don't need to do a thing to it. Just put it on the track and go to it. It will crank down to 1 scale mile per hour on speed step 1, a very amenable result. At mid speed, I got around 50 scale miles per hour and full speed was just over 100. All of that is a bit over the top, and so I'd consider trimming the top speed down to 50 and the mid down to 25. While these locos were capable of 50 to 60 in their operational potential, in point of fact the Type A trucks were not road certified and probably weren't safe much above 25 miles per hour, re-

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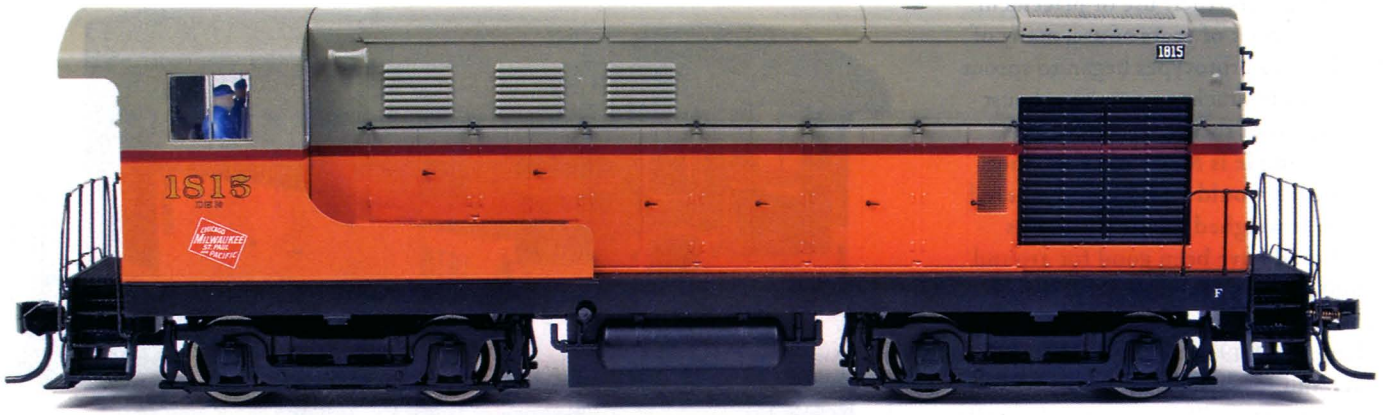

Okay. See the three sets of large louvers above the handrail in the back of the hood? Now note the grille behind the radiator panel. Those are spotting signs of the Phase 2B models. The side number boards are actually lit when the headlight is on.

stricting them to use in the yards. All switchers that used the AAR Type A trucks had similar limitations, making them comparable to the steam 0-6-0 of the same period.

I decided to adjust CV5 (Top Volts) to a setting of 125 and CV6 (Mid volts) to 75. The full speed dropped from around 105 down to 48, much more realistic. The halfway point on the throttle came down to 23. I checked three-quarter throttle and found 35 while quarter throttle came in at nine. So now I can use all of my throttle knob, not just the first half of it. Best of all, this F-M switcher has the relatively sedate poise of the prototypes.

When you program a CV, the decoder speaks out the changes with a human voice, a useful feature at times. I don't need to have spoken programming results, so I shut off that feature by setting CV62 to 0 before I attempted to change the address on the main. If you don't shut it up, the three CV automatic process will die in the first CV because that dadburn machine is flappin' its lips. As we approach the 28 function potential, this is one worth considering, to cut the speaking parts with a single push of a function key. The other option would be to let the programming go on in the background.

Walthers has endowed this model with its new helical gear trucks, making it pretty quiet when the sound is shut off. Ah, but when the sound is turned on, that's when the fun begins. This does sound like an OP engine, particularly the 6 cylinder, 12 piston variety. When compared to bell and horn volume, the engine is less noisy than other switcher

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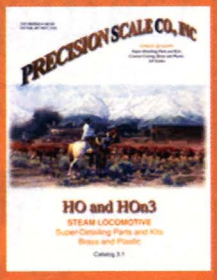

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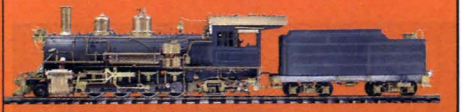
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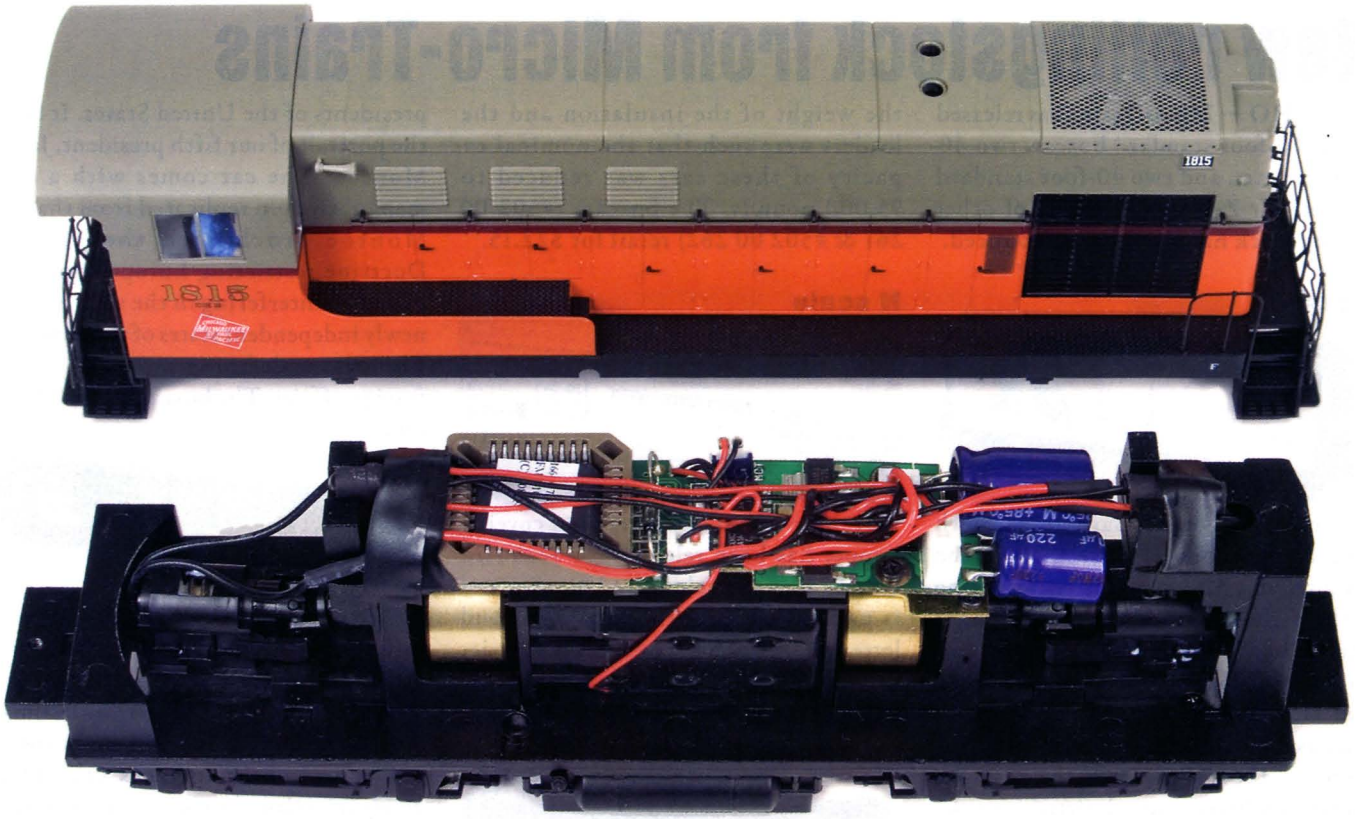

This is the inside of the sound version containing the QSI Sound/DCC/DC decoder. Bottom end performance is excellent; top end is a bit frisky, easily tamed with easy programming. A five-pole, skew-wound motor works with dual, machined flywheels to give the machine great smoothness.

diesels of the day. When out and running the line, it also has a smoother sound, consistent with our expectations.

The single "blat" horn is just wonderful, while the bell has an autoringer, and you can hear the air pressure starting before the first ring. So when I put lithe H-10-44 to work on a train, I gave it a fourteen-car heavy train, consisting of large covered hoppers and oversized boxcars, making it equivalent to more like an eighteen to nineteen car train of 40-footers. There was a little slipping at times, but it generally kept the train moving.

As with other QSI Sound Decoder models, you may press F9 three times and you will hear the engine shut down as the lights shut off. You'll hear the engineer open and then close the cab door as he leaves for the night. With a press of F6, you will hear the engineer arrive, open the door, and start the engine. Because this prime mover had antifreeze in its cooling water, it could be shut down when it wasn't going to be needed for a while.

The lighting is very nice, with very large, single lights that would be replaced later by Pyle dual lamps. These are directional with Rule 17 on the headlamp. The rear light shining from under the overhang is a real kick. The front LED illuminates the side number boards, a thoughtful feature.

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It could be you, if you'd like a dandy little switcher that runs well and sounds great. The railroads that bought the H-10-44 stationed them at local yards in the small towns they served. They built and picked apart the trains handled by the road power. They also switched the service spurs and businesses around town. Whether you use it in just one corner of a large layout or all over a small one, I bet you end up falling in love with this little locomotive!

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Z scale

A new 40-foot standard boxcar with plug door decorated for Kansas is the seventh of a 50-car series representing each of the 50 states in the union. It bears the Western Meadowlark and Sunflower, Kansas' official state bird and flower. The flag of the State of Kansas is in the background. The road-number, 1861, represents the year the 'Sunflower State' was admitted into the union. The boxcar (#502 00 507) retails for $22.95.

Two 40-foot flat cars with two different timber loads are now available. They bear the gothic Northern Pacific lettering in white, which was their standard for many years. They were built in July 1903 by Standard Steel Company and run on Roller Bearing trucks. The flat cars (#525 00 091 & #525 00 092) retail for $18.40 each.

Two 40-foot standard boxcars with plug doors are available for Pennsylvania, and are painted freight car red with black and white Keystone logos and white lettering. They were built in March 1960 and run on Bettendorf trucks. One hundred of these cars were equipped with the Pullman-Standard "Compartmentizer" loading device and marked "PC" in yellow on their doors. Also equipped for application of heaters, the weight of the insulation and the loaders were such that the nominal capacity of these cars was reduced to 95,000 pounds. The boxcars (#502 00 261 & #502 00 262) retail for $22.15.

N scale

A three-bay ACF Center Flow covered hopper has been released for Seaboard Coast Lines with elongated hatches and is painted white with black logos and lettering. It was built by ACF Industries in July 1979 and runs on Roller Bearing trucks. The hopper (#094 00 290) has the suggested retail price of $25.50.

A 40-foot standard boxcar with single door is now available and is painted mineral red with white lettering for Canadian National. It was built in February 1944 and runs on Bettendorf trucks. This boxcar was a member of the large series, which was the first to receive the white maple leaf in the mid 1940s. The logo later changed to include a green leaf. The boxcar (#020 00 796) is $13.90.

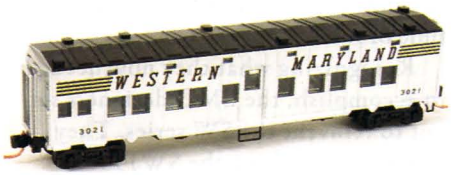
A 40-foot standard boxcar with plug door and no roofwalk is the fifth car of a 44-car series representing each of the presidents of the United States. It bears the portrait of our fifth president, James Monroe. The car comes with a commemorative pin replicated from that era. Monroe proclaimed the Monroe Doctrine restricting Europe from colonizing or interfering in the affairs of the newly independent states of the Americas. This was a defining moment in U.S. foreign affairs. The boxcar (#074 00 105) retails for $23.95.

A Burlington Northern 50-foot steel side fixed end gondola with low cover is painted BN green with white logo and lettering. It was built in 1957 by Pullman-Standard, serviced in 1979, and runs on Barber Roller Bearing trucks. One of four gondolas rebuilt for specialized service in June of 1979, this gondola has low covers and a wood floor. It was repainted and renumbered for the Burlington Northern into the 577236 to 577239 series. Green repaints were phased out in 1995 with the merger of the Burlington Northern with Santa Fe freight; cars began to appear in "BNSF Brown." The gondola (#106 00 250) retails for $19.35.

A new log car with a new log load has been released. The body style is typical of the log cars used on standard gauge railroads across the United States. The car (#114 00 090) retails for $17.75.

A 50-foot Western Maryland troop sleeper is painted aluminum with black roof, logo, and lettering. It was built sometime in 1944-1945 by Pullman-Standard, rebuilt in January 1952, and runs on Allied

Two N-scale 50-foot flat cars with straight sides and pipe load has been released for Southern Pacific. The cars are painted brown with white lettering. They were built in 1968 by American Car & Foundry in St. Louis, MO, and run on Roller Bearing trucks; The set includes a pipe load. The flat cars (#044 00 110) retail for $28.10.



Full Cushion trucks. Western Maryland purchased a total of 25 troop cars in two batches during 1947 and 1948. 3021 was formerly used as a troop sleeper by the U.S. military during World War II and was converted to MOW service in January 1952. Stenciled with the full Western Maryland "speed" lettering paint scheme over aluminum paint, troop-sleeper 3021 is in Maintenance-of-Way service providing sleeping quarters to crews at the MOW sites. The car (#116 00 050) retails for $19.55.

A 40-foot USRA steel boxcar with side brakewheel and ribbed roof has been released for Seaboard Air Line. It is painted boxcar red with white and red logo, white lettering, and was built in April 1937 by Pullman-Standard, rebuilt in May 1956, and runs on Bettendorf trucks. This car, part of a 1,000 car fleet of Class B-6 boxcars, lasted well into the 1980s. They were built in 1937 by Pullman Standard and shown with the "Route of the Silver Meteor" paint scheme applied after its service in 1956. The boxcar (#120 00 250) retails for $15.05.

A Pennsylvania 50-foot wagon top boxcar with double doors with white

Keystone herald and white lettering. It was built in April 1937 by Pullman-Standard and runs on Coil Elliptic trucks. Pennsylvania Railroad's "round roof" series of cars were used mainly for hauling automobiles and were designed with a new 10-foot internal height clearance. To clear the low tunnel and stone bridge arches common in the east; the roofs were curved/truncated at the sides. This 1,000 car fleet was painted in "Iron Sesqui-Oxide" the color PRR used prior to 1953. The boxcar (#079 00 010) retails for $15.95.

HOn3

A new 30-foot flat car has been released for Denver Rio Grande Western. It is painted boxcar red with white lettering and runs on Bettendorf trucks. This series of one hundred 30-foot flat cars were built by the D&RGW during the late nineteenth century and were numbered from 6000 to 6099. The railroad soon found they required cars with greater capacity; consequently, the cars in this series were replaced with heavier capacity cars as needed. The flat car (#855 00 032) retails for $32.90.

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HO — Marklin Inc. has announced the release of their new Circus Mondolino starter set. The set comes with a circus train, which is comprised of an old-timer steam locomotive and three freight cars, circus figures, a cutout circus tent, a power pack, and an infrared locomotive controller. The company states that the controller can control up to four locomotives on the layout.

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REVIEW O

The Atlas O MP15: Where the "MP" Truly Stands for Multipurpose

Review and Photos by David Otte

MP15 3-Rail TMCC, MSRP: $479.95
MP15 2-Rail Gold, MSRP: $479.95
MP15 Unpowered, MSRP: $249.95

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BY EARLY 1974, the last of General Motors Electro Motive Division's 808 SW1500 diesel-electric locomotives were being delivered, and with them, the four-decade reign of the SW series had come to an abrupt end. From the 1936 introduction of the Winton-powered SW, EMD had always held the majority share of the switcher market. However, the economic recession years of the 1970s as well as a worldwide oil crisis were the impetus for change in the way railroads utilized locomotives and their new motive power purchasing practices. Cost-conscious management wanted a do-it-all diesel capable of any task assigned to it. EMD's answer to their appeal, and the subject of a new offering by Atlas O, was a 1,500 horsepower, multi-purpose locomotive identified simply as the MP15.

The EMD MP15 — Déjà vu?

When cash flow is squeezed, the railroads quickly learn how to adapt to their situation and make do with what they have. A prime example was their reaction to locomotives assigned to switcher duty. As first-generation road units, such as 1,500 horsepower GP7s, and F-units and the 1,750 horsepower GP9, began to be relegated to secondary use as more modern power came on line, they were put to work in yards where they might shunt cars all day like the traditional switchers, but they were also capable of moving a consist out of the yards and down a branchline or even on the mainline at road speeds; something the switcher class was not designed to do. Versatility, therefore, had become the watchword of the day.

While the railroads continued to rebuild these older locomotives to keep them in shape for their new calling, profit-oriented EMD was looking for a fresh design that might encourage the purchase of new locomotives. With "versatility" now implanted in their minds, the engineering staff at the premier locomotive builder turned to a custom order of 60 SW1504s that had been constructed for the Nacionales de Mexico in the summer of 1973. The Mexican railroad, seeking that identical flexibility as their US counterparts, had requested a SW1500 modified with the same standard, reliable Blomberg road trucks as used on those old Geeps. The slightly stretched cousin of the SW1500 could now serve the NdeM in a multitude of roles.

Recognizing what they now needed to accomplish, the EMD designers set out to reinvent the SW series. They began by stretching the SW1500's frame by four feet, moving apart the truck centers to not only accommodate for the longer 9-foot wheelbase of the Blomberg trucks, but also a larger 1,400 gallon fuel tank on par with those carried by the GP7s and 9s for an extended operating duration. The general carbody shape was retained, but the hood was also lengthened near the cab, offering an internal space for a toilet which was now mandated by the government on all road units. The 12-cylinder model 645E prime mover was retained, as well, but the additional length and 12,000 pounds of extra weight resulting from the redesign provided the unit not only with a better ride, but also an improved continuous tractive effort.

Recognizing this locomotive's new capabilities, EMD no longer used the SW designation, but rather MP, which stood for multi-purpose along with 15 for 1,500 horsepower. The Class 1 railroads as well as many smaller regional and industrial carriers began to take note of the MP15. To many observers, the interest over this model evoked a feeling of déjà vu. They equated it with a similar response experienced back in 1941 with the introduction of another multi-purpose engine: the American Locomotive Company's revolutionary RS-1 road switcher. Unfortunately for EMD, the MP15 did not sell quite as well as the early Alco unit with only

I like to think of EMD's MP15 as a switcher-road unit in contrast to say EMD's GP9 road-switcher. The multi-purpose diesel-electric was more akin to a switcher with its cab orientation and large windows, but its Blomberg road trucks and 62:15 gear ratio allowed it to travel at speeds up to 65 miles per hour outside of the yard limits when needed. EMD was somewhat successful in convincing the railroads that this design was the answer to their needs for more versatile motive power, selling 351 units by the end of production in early 1983. Atlas O is offering their scale model of this transitional diesel setup for either 3-rail operation with TMCC and RailSounds or for 2-rail Gold with QSI DCC-Sound decoder. Unpowered units are also being made available.

The Alaska Railroad has come to own four MP15s secondhand. The first two units came from the Lake Erie, Franklin and Clarion Railroad in Pennsylvania. Built in August of 1976, LEF&C's number 25 was sold to the Alaska Railroad in 1992 after that line was abandoned. She became ARR 1551 appearing at that time as represented here by the new model. Atlas O has done an exquisite job in recreating every detail of the ARR prototype from color choices to lettering type to more road specific details encompassing sand box style, air filtration system, and horn location. This attention to detail is consistent across the board with all of the company's O-scale MP15s and they even provide the auxiliary exhaust silencers outfitted on some railroads' units.

351 being produced (including five for Canada and seven for Mexico) between 1974 and 1983. The largest original owner of the MP15 was the Southern Railway, which purchased 88 units, with the Missouri Pacific, the very first customer for the MP15, not far behind at 62 units.

A year after its introduction, the MP15DC, as it was now being called, was joined by the MP15AC model, which utilized an alternator producing AC power for traction motor current rather than a DC generator as used on the former design. As DC traction motors were retained, a space-consuming rectifier was necessary in the MP15AC resulting in its chassis being about a foot-and-a-half longer then the MP15DC. Also, the MP15AC design incorporated Dash 2 electronic equipment, an even larger fuel tank, and an electric cooling system similar in design to the famous Tunnel Motor SD40T-2s, which easily visually differentiates the 246 units built from the MP15DC. The MP15 series was concluded with a turbo-charged 8-cylinder version in a modified carbody known as the MP15T built almost exclusively for Seaboard Systems in 1984 and 1985.

Atlas O MP15: Jack-of-All-Trades

Currently, the Union Pacific is the largest operator of the MP15DC, having acquired 102 units through various mergers and purchases. However, the EMD units are hard at work in various numbers on other Class 1 roads, too, such as the Burlington Northern Santa Fe, CSX, Norfolk Southern, and Kansas City Southern. However, it is the four units on the Alaska Railroad's roster that are of interest here. Besides being simply one of the most colorful examples of this diesel type, an O-scale version of the ARR's MP15 is the focus of our review.

Let me begin by stating that this eye-catching replica wears an accurate and impeccable paint job. The manufacturer has correctly applied black paint to the top of the hood aft of the radiator grille, the parting lines between colors are sharp, the yellow is opaque, and appropriate diagonal safety striping has been applied to the pilots. Graphics are equally well executed right down to the small readable safety placards and EMD builder's plates. I also appreciated the fact that Atlas O didn't forget those small roadnumbers at the top right-hand front and rear corners of the cab that might have gone unnoticed by non-ARR fans.

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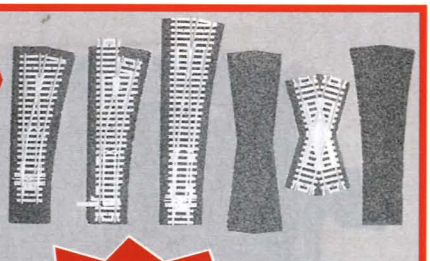
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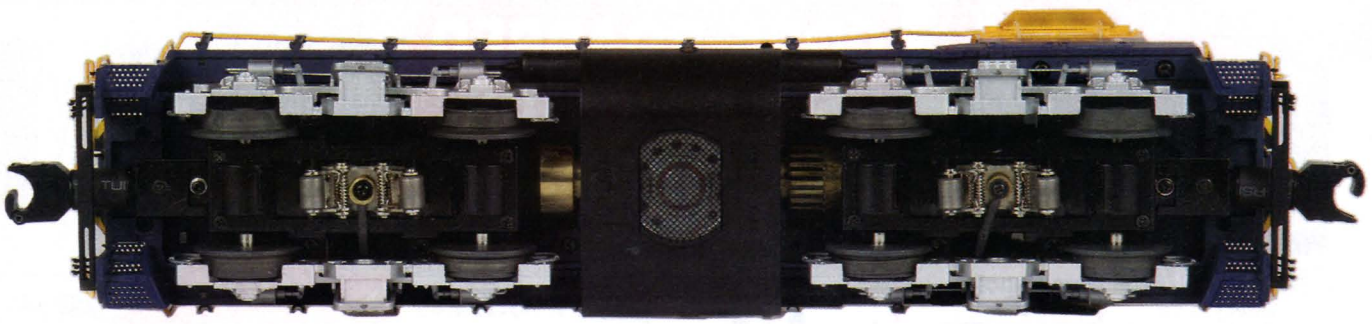
The rear view of the switcher shows off the MP15's round cab roof, large window glass, and the sandbox locations on either side of the entry steps. Atlas O has made good use of the view through those large windows providing seated, hand-painted crew figures and an illuminated control panel. The side windows are even equipped with see-through wind deflectors while the front and rear windows exhibit painted-on black gaskets. Note also the add-on windshield wipers, wire pull handles on the battery compartments doors, the round sand hatches, and the see-through perforated cab steps.

Number 1551 is one of four (1551 – 1554) MP15DCs currently owned by the ARR. Locomotives 1551 and 1552 were originally owned by the Lake Erie, Franklin and Clarion Railroad, a 15 mile shortline that ran between the Pennsylvania towns of Summerville and Clarion. There they served as roadnumbers 25 and 26 until they were sold to the ARR in 1992. Atlas O is also offering number 1552 at this time and both are correctly detailed for freshly painted units put into service on May 6, 1992; within a few years the air horns were moved down onto the hoods.

The phrase "correctly detailed," however, needs some further explanation. EMD did make some options available to their MP15DC customers over the years of production and they need to be mentioned as Atlas O, in their constant striving for complete accuracy within the Master Series line, is providing these alterations as appropriate for the other roadnames being offered at this time: BNSF, CSX, Reading, Southern, Southern Pacific, Genessee & Wyoming, Burlington Northern, Conrail, MoPac, Norfolk Southern, UP, and Manufacturers Railway, as well as an undecorated version.

The first of these options involves the air filter system. As initially developed, EMD was equipping the MP15 with a standard carbody air filter, leaving the sloping transition of the rear hood to the cab intact as on earlier SW series switchers and as found on the ARR unit. In time, these small-sized filters proved to be maintenance problems and EMD came up with an improved high-volume paper air filter. This new design resulted in a box-shaped structure being added to the hood right behind the rear exhaust stack. Some boxes were flat while others had a sloping rear portion. Another option involved the



The eight-wheel-drive MP15 is powered by a horizontally mounted can motor with dual flywheels. To insure that the 3-rail versions will not stall on long turnouts, Atlas O has outfitted each truck with two sprung center rail roller pickups. Also noteworthy are the traction tires installed on the inside axles' wheels on each truck, the diecast metal fuel tank, which also houses the RailSound speaker (visible through wire mesh grille), and the see-through treads of the access steps separately applied to the diecast metal pilots.

sand boxes located on the rear behind the cab and at the front hood sides. Standard size boxes are as they appear on the ARR model, while the large-capacity boxes saw an increase in height in the rear and bumped-out side extensions in the front. Finally, as government regulations required roads to use exhaust silencers, EMD equipped some MP15s with auxiliary box-shaped silencers that fit around the base of the stacks and extended about halfway up their height.

As we have come to expect, Atlas O has all of these road-specific characteristics covered and, boy, is this model full of great detail. Starting with the plastic carbody, all the molded-in access doors with their latches and hinges, vent louvers, and panel lines are crisp in appearance, as is the non-skid tread plate incorporated into the walkways atop the diecast metal chassis. The separately applied detail parts really stand out on this model as well, with wire grab irons, metal hand rails and properly formed stanchions, working drop steps, multiple-unit electrical receptacle, and safety chain on the end platforms, see-through, perforated pilot steps, MU air hoses, coupler lift bars, etched-metal radiator air intake grille and hood top exhaust grille that correctly wraps over to the upper sides, sand hatches, and mechanical bell: and that's just on the hood and chassis!

Check out the cab. It's equipped with add-on sunshades, wind deflectors, front and rear windshield wipers, clear glazing with painted-on gaskets, a firecracker-style antenna on the roof, a two-chime air horn out front, and metal handrail leading down the rear steps. Then there are the interior details that include hand-painted figures, seats, and an illuminated control panel.

Underneath the chassis are a diecast metal fuel tank, air reservoir tanks, and those famous Blomberg trucks positioned properly on scale 24-foot 2-inch centers. These standard two-axle trucks exhibit the proper scale 9-foot wheelbase and are molded in diecast metal with hand-applied brake cylinders, air lines, sanding lines running down along the brake hangers, and outside swing hangers.

The 11.125-inch-long model (over the pilots) also came with a pair of pilot plows for consumer installation. As plows come in handy when railroading in Alaska and have been pictured on the ARR's MP15s from time to time, I went

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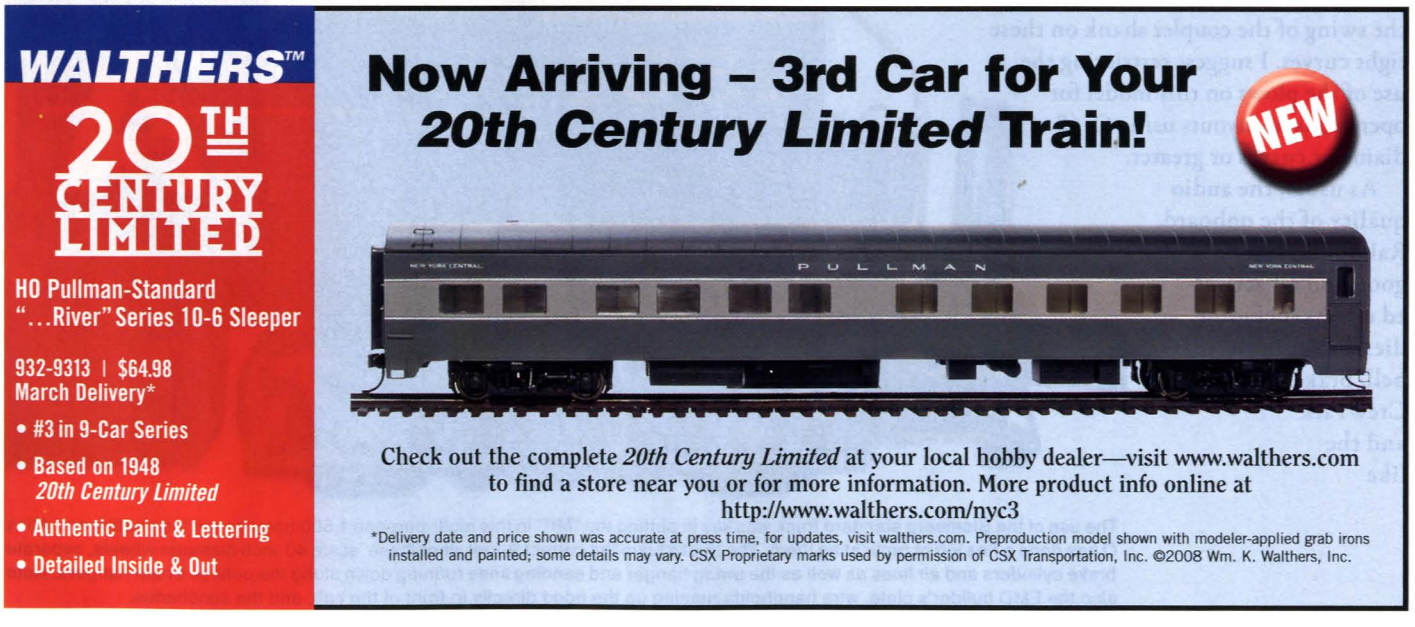
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ahead and installed them on our sample. No instructions were included, but the procedure is pretty straightforward. The lower section of the pilot is a separately applied plastic part with locating pins on the back, the same as the plows, and is simply press-fitted into the holes on pilot. Carefully pull this detail off, and then apply the plow. You will need to work the MU hoses through the openings in the plow first. I found it necessary to scrape some of the paint off of the locating pins first, before the plow would press snuggly up against the pilot.

With plows attached, ARR 1551 was ready for duty on the test track. Our sample is equipped with all the usual goodies found on the 3-rail offerings: Train Master Command Control, RailSounds 4.0, ElectroCouplers, and Engineer On Board speed control. Like their previously released SW series models, Atlas O's MP15 is equipped with a very capable horizontal drive mechanism that utilizes a single can motor with dual flywheels. This arrangement provides the modern EMD unit with superb slow running qualities ideal for switching. The only drawback to this design is that there is no room in the carbody for a fan-driven exhaust unit.

The 3 pound 10.1 ounce model, which is outfitted with traction tires on the inside axles' wheels on each truck, managed to pull a 17-car consist through O-36 diameter curves. However, after I installed the plows on our sample, the locomotive continued to derail the car behind it whenever entering these minimum curves. The opening in the plow is not as large as the one in the pilot limiting the swing of the coupler shank on these tight curves. I suggest restricting the use of the plows on this model for operations on layouts using O-48 diameter curves or greater.

As usual, the audio quality of the onboard RailSound system was good and all activated effects including diesel roar, horn, bell, brakes, CrewTalk and the like worked flawlessly, as did the directional golden-white LED-equipped front and rear headlights. The ElectroCouplers are always a treat on a switcher unit and I gave them a workout shunting cars in and out of the sidings. The EOB speed control, set for 128-speed step mode, kept this model running smooth as butter out on the mainline whether at its lowest speed of 1.7 scale miles per hour or when pushing its maximum at 50.9 scale miles per hour (the prototype could muster 65 miles per hour). Finally, when it was time for yard duty, the EOB unit was easy to turn off through the TMCC CAB-1 controller for more immediate responsive handling.

A True Multi-Purpose Model

Like the prototype, the new Atlas O MP15 can be a do-it-all locomotive on your layout. Its compact, yet accurate size and maneuverability are perfect for those small pikes built on a 4 x 8 sheet of plywood while still allowing the modeler the benefit of command control and a digital sound system. It also has the muscle and speed control to pull those longer consists on the mainline. Finally, it offers the exacting details and museum quality like appearance for which your Hi-rail or Scale roster is calling. This Master Series model has it all!

The etched-metal radiator grilles are evident in this view as are pilot drop step, accurately reproduced metal stanchions and hand rail, safety chain, MU electrical receptacle, coupler cut bar, MU air hoses on the pilot, and the consumer applied snowplow. Note the smaller opening in the plow as compared to the pilot restricting the side-to-side movement of the coupler. Speaking of couplers, standard on all 3-rail Master Series models are command control operated ElectroCouplers. Golden-white LEDs are utilized for illuminating the headlights and number boards.

The use of the Blomberg standard truck was key in putting the "MP" in this multi-purpose 1,500 horsepower locomotive and Atlas O has done a fine job of replicating them. The trucks have the correct 9-foot wheelbase, scale 40-inch diameter wheels, separate brake cylinders and air lines as well as the swing hanger and sanding lines running down along the outside brake hangers. Note also the EMD builder's plate, wire handholds running up the hood directly in front of the cab, and the sunshades.

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REVIEW N

Dieselization Comes to the Southern Pacific *Daylight*

Review and Photos by Phil Scandura

Southern Pacific PA-1 and PB-1 Diesel Locomotives, MSRP: $95.00 each

Kato USA, Inc.
100 Remington Rd
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847-781-9500 • Fax: 847-781-9570
www.katousa.com

By-The-Numbers

Alco PA-1
Kato
N Scale 1:160 • Type: Diesel
Traction Tires? No

Pull Power (Ozs @ Full Slip)

Pull	÷	Loco Wt	=	Efficiency
0.84		4.76		17.6%

Volts	Amps
10	0.22

Analog DC

Start Volts = 1.8

Volts	Amps	Scale MPH
1.8	0.07	8.5
5.0	0.12	76.6
10.0	0.15	150.8

DCC

Stall Amps: 0.69

By-The-Numbers

Alco PB-1
Kato
N Scale 1:160 • Type: Diesel
Traction Tires? No

Pull Power (Ozs @ Full Slip)

Pull	÷	Loco Wt	=	Efficiency
0.84		4.76		17.6%

Volts	Amps
10	0.19

Analog DC

Start Volts = 1.6

Volts	Amps	Scale MPH
1.6	0.07	3.7
5.0	0.12	78.4
10.0	0.12	147.9

DCC

Stall Amps: 0.68

IN THE August 2008 issue of *Model Railroad News* readers witnessed the beauty of the world's most beautiful passenger train model, the Southern Pacific *Daylight* produced by Kato in the GS4 steam version. Decorated in perhaps the most colorful paint scheme ever conceived, heads turned wherever the real *Daylight* appeared. In its heyday it would enjoy ridership that included statesmen, movie stars, and even Joe the plumber. The *Daylight* made a powerful statement of hope during a time when hope was in high demand.

Now Kato has introduced N-scale PA-1 and PB-1 diesels decorated in *Daylight* colors, in keeping with the dieselization of the *Coast Daylight* that began in 1955. Simply uncouple the GS4, send it off to the roundhouse, couple up in its place a

Following on the heels of the early release of the GS4 steam version of the Southern Pacific *Daylight*, Kato has introduced N-scale PA-1 and PB-1 diesels decorated in Daylight colors, in keeping with the dieselization of the *Coast Daylight* that began in 1955. In real life these units headed up the *Coast Daylight* until 1971 when it was retired after Amtrak took over U.S. railroad passenger service.

This close-up view of the PA nose highlights the simple, clean styling created by General Electric industrial designer, Ray Stevenson, winner of a design contest sponsored by GE. In contrast, the PB nose on the right is simple and functional.

PA/PB pair, and you've successfully modernized your passenger train!

The new PA-1 and PB-1 models from Kato feature a DCC-friendly mechanism, designed to accept a drop-in decoder; five-pole motor with dual brass flywheels; frictionless trucks with blackened metal wheels; and Kato's fully-automatic magnetic knuckle couplers. The PA-1 is offered in Southern Pacific roadnumbers 6055 and 6056, while the PB-1 is offered in roadnumbers 5922 and 5924. Other roadnames available are AT&SF Red Warbonnet, Denver & Rio Grande Western, and Delaware & Hudson Blue Warbonnet. Prices vary slightly between roadnames; visit the Kato web site for more information.

The Prototype

The dieselization of Southern Pacific's passenger trains began as World War II ended. In 1947, the Shasta Route, Overland Route, Golden State Route, and Sunset Route would begin the changeover from steam to diesel, beginning with the use of several A-B-B (cab-booster-booster) sets of EMD E7s. The orange, red, and black *Daylight* paint scheme was adapted for use on the diesel sets with stunning results. When coupled to a string of *Daylight* passenger cars, everything flowed together in the spirit of true streamlining.

Not to be outdone by EMD, the American Locomotive Company (Alco) was busy working on its competitive offering to the EMD E7s. Working with electrical supplier General Electric, Alco would introduce the stylish PA-1 and companion PB-1 cabless booster unit in 1946. The PA-1's good looks were created by General Electric industrial designer, Ray Stevenson, winner of a new locomotive design contest sponsored by his employer.

Alco designed the PA/PB series primarily for passenger service, although some would also see freight service later in life. The PA-1 was originally a 2,000 horsepower locomotive, but would be updated in 1950 as the PA-2 and once more in 1952 as the PA-3, both with increased horsepower of 2,250 horses. The PA-1 and PA-2 were outwardly identical, while the PA-3 had minor trim changes and eliminated the rear porthole behind the engine grills. In total, Alco delivered 247 PA units and 47 PB units by the time production ended in 1953. Of these, approximately 167 were PA-1s and 81 were PB-1s.

The Model

Based on the unit roadnumbers, Kato has chosen to model PA-1 units that were first delivered to the Texas and New Orleans railroad, a Southern Pacific subsidiary, and then later placed into service on the *Daylight* trains. According to Southern Pacific references, Texas and New Orleans received an order of PA-1 units numbered 200 – 211 between June and August of 1949. Years later in 1965, they would be renumbered SP 6055 – 6066, painted in *Daylight* colors and placed into service on the *Coast Daylight*. The Kato PA units represent SP 6055 and 6056 of that series.

The two PB units, 5922 and 5924, were part of the PB-2 series 5918 – 5924 delivered by Alco directly to the Southern Pacific between August 1950 and June 1953. The Kato package label refers to these units as PB-1s, even

The spacing between PA and PB unit, when equipped with Kato couplers, measures out at approximately three scale feet between the diaphragms, about as close as you can get and still negotiate small-radius track.

though their roadnumbers belong to the PB-2 series. Since externally both look identical (the only difference being the available horsepower), you could call them PB-1s or PB-2s.

In real life the units offered by Kato would pull the *Coast Daylight* until its retirement in 1971 when Amtrak took over passenger service in the United States.

When compared with available prototype scale drawings and photos, the Kato models match all major dimensions. A visual inspection of the typical spotting features also showed agreement between the model and scale drawings. No major discrepancies were noted.

Performance Testing

The PA comes equipped with a constant brightness headlight, produced by a yellow/orange LED. The headlight is also directional, turning off when the locomotive is operated in reverse. The LED also serves to illuminate the numberboards; consequently they go dark when operated in reverse. Under the body shell the only mechanical difference between the PA and PB chassis is the lack of a headlight LED (the PB has no lighting, of course).

Both the PA and PB are smooth running, although considerable motor whining was observed at medium to high speeds. At first the PB was much nosier than the PA, but it quieted down as it began breaking in. I would imagine additional running would help reduce the whine more. As noted in the "By-The-Numbers" box, the speeds were fairly closely matched between the PA and PB. The low-end and mid-point speeds were quite good, although the top-end is considerably higher then the prototype 110 MPH.

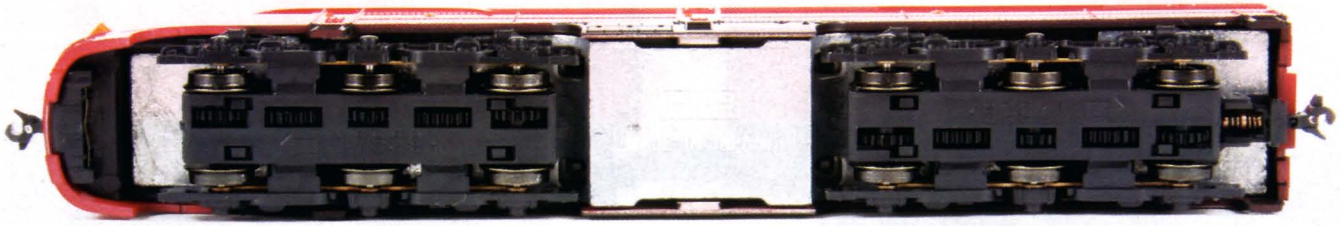
All wheels were in gauge, when measured with the NMRA Mark IV standards gauge. In addition, the Kato models negotiated all popular brands of code 80 and code 55 track, thanks to low-profile flanges. Even with three-axle trucks the models were able to handle an 8.5 inch operating radius; although, the nose overhang looked somewhat unprototypical.

Kato's operating knuckle couplers matched the Micro-Trains coupler height gauge perfectly and performed well. The modeler must install the coupler trip pins; use a Micro-Trains trip pin height gauge to ensure the pins are adjusted properly and won't snag on turnout frogs and track crossings.

No disassembly instructions were included; neither were an exploded parts view or parts listing. Replacement parts are available on the Kato web site, along with a limited amount of maintenance information; perhaps more will be posted over time.

The Kato warranty covers defects for a period of 60 days from date of purchase.

Both the PA (bottom) and PB (top) included steam generators to provide passenger car heating. Evidenced by the vents on the roof, one is located at the rear of the PA unit, while the other is located at the front of the PB unit. Primarily run in pairs, this placed the steam "plumbing" adjacent to each other to simplify hookup.



Electrical pickup is provided by all twelve wheels, chemically blackened to reduce the unprototypical shine of polished metal, and mounted in frictionless trucks for smooth operation. The Alco prototype trucks are A-1-A style, signifying that the outer axles are powered and the middle axle is not. Kato has chosen to power all axles instead, giving the model significant pulling power without the need for traction tires.

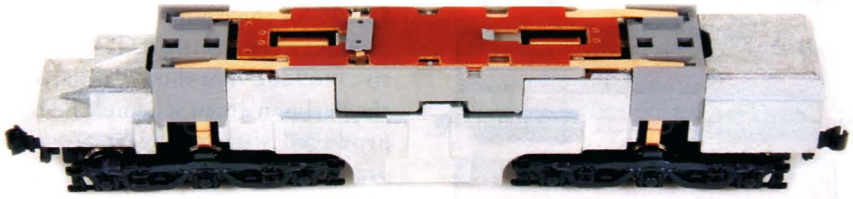
The *Daylight* passenger train is beautiful and famous, the world over. Thanks to Kato, fans of both steam and diesel now have the chance to model this wonderful train in N scale.

DCC Conversion

The Kato PA-1 and PB-1 are advertised as DCC-friendly, designed for an easy conversion to DCC using an aftermarket drop-in decoder such as the Digitrax DN163K0A. Since the PA unit doesn't need a backup light, you'll want to cut the rear LED off the decoder board. The PB doesn't use any lights, so cut off both LEDs.

Simply Beautiful

The *Daylight* passenger train is beautiful and famous, the world over. Thanks to Kato, fans of both steam and diesel now have the chance to model this wonderful train in N scale. Once again, Kato produces another prototypically correct and smooth running model for the N-scale community. Thanks Kato!



Kato designed the PA and PB chassis to accept an aftermarket drop-in decoder, such as the Digitrax DN163K0A. Shown here is the inside of the PB unit; notice the absence of lights on the "light board." To convert to DCC, replace the factory light board with the drop-in decoder, per the Digitrax instructions. Quick, easy, and fast!

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59009: Southern Pacific #4294 - Tender Lettering

Stock Number - N Scale
79001: Southern Pacific - No Lettering
79002: Southern Pacific #4275 - Tender Lettering
79003: Southern Pacific #4278 - No Tender Lettering
79004: Southern Pacific #4287 - No Tender Lettering
79005: Southern Pacific #4292 - Tender Lettering

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New EMD F7A and F7B locomotives from Intermountain

N — Intermountain has released their latest run of rollingstock: three EMD F3A and F3B locomotives, four EMD F7A and F7B locomotives, an EMD F7A unit, two EMD FP7 and F7B units, and six Santa Fe refrigerator cars. The models are available in six roadnumbers, unless noted otherwise.

Three new EMD F3A and F3B units are now available in the following roadnames: Gulf, Mobile & Ohio (#69120 & #69820) painted dark and light red, the lettering and fine striping is yellow, and is available in four roadnumbers for the A-unit, and two for the B-unit; Chicago Great Western (#69121 & #69621) is decorated maroon and orange with yellow striping, the round CGW logo is also yellow, it is available with four roadnumbers for the A-unit, and three for the B; Central of New Jersey (#69123 & #69823, B-unit not shown) is painted dark green, with yellow stripes and herald, it is available in four roadnumbers for the A-unit, and two for the B. The models feature finely molded details, etched metal grilles, wire handrails, and Micro-Trains couplers. The smooth drive is DCC-ready. The locomotives retail for $89.95 for the A-units, and $84.95 for the B-unit.

Three new EMD F7A and F7B locomotives are now available. Chicago & North Western (#69204 & #69704) is painted green, yellow, and black. The C&NW herald on the nose is red, silver, black, and yellow. It is available with four roadnumbers for both the A- and B-units. D&RGW (#69211 & #69711) is painted Aspen gold and aluminum with black striping. The locomotive is available with four roadnumbers for the A-unit. Chesapeake & Ohio (#69219 & #69719) is painted blue and yellow in the C&O's classic "low bow wave" scheme, and is available in four roadnumbers for both the A- and B-units. Lehigh Valley (#69259 & #69759), not shown, is decorated in Cornell red with black striping. The roadname is lettered in dulux gold. The A-unit is available in four roadnumbers and the B-unit is available in three. The models feature wire handrails, and grab irons. Each comes complete with etched metal grilles and Micro-Trains couplers, and are DCC ready. The locomotives retail for $89.95 for the A-units, and $84.95 for the B-unit.

A Western Pacific EMD F7A locomotive (#69262–not shown) is decorated in the Perlman green scheme, and has been produced with two variations of the orange striping. It features finely molded details, etched metal grilles, wire handrails, and Micro-Trains couplers. It is DCC-ready. The locomotive is available in four roadnumbers, and retails for $89.95.

Two new EMD FP7 and F7B locomotives are available. Richmond, Fredericksburg & Potomac (#69955 & #69755) is painted blue and gray, the let-

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tering and striping is gold. Pennsylvania (#69957 & #69757) is painted in Tuscan red livery with the five dulux gold stripes. Intermountain has produced all four A-unit numbers and both B-unit numbers of the prototypes. The models feature finely molded details, etched metal grilles, wire handrails, and Micro-Trains couplers. They come DCC-ready. The locomotives retail for $119.95 for the A-unit, and $84.95 for the B-unit.

Six Santa Fe refrigerator cars have been released. *El Capitan* (#66107) is painted ATSF yellow with black roof and ends. The car is lettered RR23 class with the *El Capitan* slogan. *Grand Canyon* (#66108) is painted ATSF yellow with black roof and ends. The car is lettered for the RR 23 class with the *Grand Canyon* slogan. The *Chief West* (#66110) is painted ATSF yellow with black roof and ends, and is lettered for RR32 class with the *Chief West* slogan. *Ship & Travel* (#66111) is painted ATSF yellow, and is lettered for the RR21 class with the *Ship & Travel* slogan and the large Santa Fe herald. *Super Chief* (#66113, not shown) is painted ATSF yellow with black roof and ends. It is lettered for the RR28 class with the *Super Chief* slogan. The *Chief West* (#66116, not shown) is decorated ATSF yellow with black ends and roof, and is lettered for the RR28 class with the *Chief West* slogan. The cars have finely molded details and are equipped with Micro-Trains trucks and couplers. The refrigerator cars retail for $21.95 each.

Intermountain Railway Co., P.O. Box 839, Longmont, CO 80502-0839; 303-772-1901; Fax: 303-772-8534; E-mail: intermountain@intermountain-railway.com; www.intermountain-railway.com

New Memphis Belle boxcar from Deluxe

N — Deluxe is slated to release a new 40-foot boxcar and a TTX Maxi-Stack III well car.

A new Liberty Squadron series 40-foot boxcar has been announced. It is decorated for Memphis Belle, a B-17 that completed twenty-five missions before it was rotated home. The plane was named for a character in a film starring John Wayne and Joan Blondell called *Lady for a Night*. The image is from *Esquire Magazine's* April 1941 issue centerfold. The boxcar (#240661) is expected the third quarter of 2009, and will retail for $29.95.

A TTX Maxi-Stack III 5-unit double-stack well car is also available for pre-order. It is painted yellow, and has black lettering, and a black and white herald. This will be the fifth and sixth roadnumber for this set. The well car (#210135 & #210136) will retail for $99.95 each and is due next fall.

Deluxe Innovations, 9 Whippany Rd Unit 10, Whippany, NJ 07981-1540; 973-887-3919; Fax: 973-887-5123; E-mail: info@deluxeinnovations.com; www.deluxeinnovations.com

New Maxi IV TTX well car from Kato

Katos new N-scale Maxi IV well cars should be available in February/March of this year. The set includes Kato's magnetic system to keep containers in place.

N — Kato has released new Maxi IV TTX well car with CN 53-foot containers. The cars are operational with the Kato CN SD40-2 Mid versions, or the CP AC4400, UP SD40, UP C44-9W, or CR SD80MAC. The loads are said to be easy to move because of the Kato metal plate and magnet in each container. The cars (#106-6121 & #106-6166) retail for $89.00.

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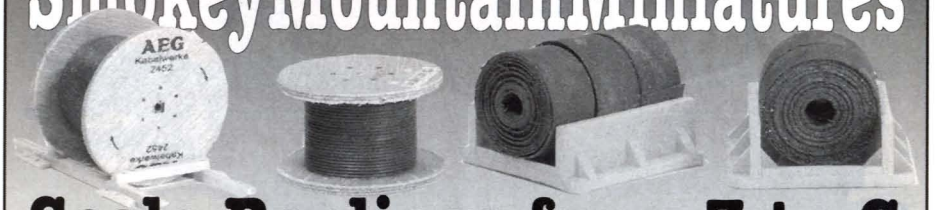

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REVIEW **Large (1:20.3)**

Bachmann's Davenport "Critter" a real keeper

Review and Photos by John Sipple

Side Rod Gas Mechanical locomotive, MSRP: $275.00
E-Z Command locomotive decoder, MSRP: $33.00

Bachmann Industries
1400 E. Erie Ave.
Philadelphia, PA 19124-5698
215-533-1600 • Fax: 215-744-4699
www.bachmanntrains.com

DH163P Mobile Decoder, MSRP: $32.99

Digitrax, Inc.
2443 Transmitter Road
Panama City, FL 30071-4228
770-441-7992 • 770-441-0759
www.digitrax.com

By-The-Numbers

0-4-0 Davenport
Bachmann
LSF 1:20.3 • Type: Diesel
Traction Tires? No

Pull Power (Ozs @ Full Slip)

Pull	÷	Loco Wt	=	Efficiency
27.2		62		43.9%

Volts	Amps
18	1.2

Analog DC

Start Volts = 5

Volts	Amps	Scale MPH
5	0.05	1.7
10	0.07	5.2
15	0.10	19.9

DCC

Stall Amps: 3.0

Speed	Step (of 128)	Scale MPH
Min	10	2.5
Mid	63	25.9
Top	126	37.6

THIS first release of the Davenport "Critter" does not offer any road-name decoration. Instead, we have a choice of color schemes: basic black with silver and yellow details, silver and black, yellow and black, green and black, and red and black.

Davenport's Critters were relatively unsophisticated machines that existed to move small cuts of cars around. This little rascal is perfect for industrial work around your Fn3 layout.

Critters

Someplace along the line, small gas or diesel locomotives came to be called "critters," though the actual source of this appellation is obscure by now. The fact is, Critters came along for a specific reason. As GE, Alco, and Ingersol-Rand struggled to create the first production diesel-electric locomotive, smaller industrial switchers already existed in limited quantities and would remain an important chunk of the market.

There was no cutting edge technology in any of this. Small builders of locomotives cropped up, sweeping items off the shelf and into little industrial pullers. Ready buyers could choose between gas and diesel with propane and other fuels offered, too. An order could specify just about any tonnage rating from five up, with either a fixed set of axles or trucks to provide more wheels with a flexible wheelbase. If you chose a small loco (these being the critters) you could also specify if you wanted mechanical or electrical transmission.

It was very common for a critter to have only one axle powered by an electric motor or a mechanical transmission, and the other axles would get their power by easy-to-maintain outside main rods. Gasoline was often preferred because such engines were quicker and easier to start. The Critter would sit unused for hours, not even idling, until some cars needed a shove. Then an engineer and a brakeman would start up the Critter and get to work.

Davenport was one such small loco builder, located in Davenport, Iowa, part of the Quad Cities area that includes Bettendorf on the Iowa side of the river plus Moline and Rock Island on the Illinois side. A builder of locomotives since 1902, Davenport constructed its first gas loco in 1924. The buyers of Critters were not limited to industries; the big railroads bought them, too. Rio Grande owned one from 1937 to 1970 when the little 3-foot narrow gauge 30 tonner went to work on the Roaring Camp & Big Trees.

The Bachmann Davenport

What we have is about a thirty tonner, rather similar to the ones built for Rock Island between 1940 and 1941, only our sample is in 1:20.3 three-foot narrow gauge (Fn3). These were diesel-mechanicals, and the rounded transmission hump in the cab seems to bear this out. As I examined this Critter, I was in for some pleasant surprises!

The very first thing I noticed was its heft. For such a small locomotive, it weighed in at 3 pounds 14 ounces (62 ounces). Much of this weight is due to

As a rule, the headlight on a Davenport was either built into the front panel above the radiator or was a small appliance just above. This Bachmann Shay headlight certainly does give it character.

the diecast frame. That lifts this Critter out of the world of train set cheapies. This was further reinforced as I examined it more closely. This is a painted model, though it lacks any roadname or lettering. At this point, the only decoration is a vertical "Davenport" on the front of the hood.

It is axiomatic that such machines used very little fancy metalwork or ornate details. Their spartan utility came forth as a plainness that lacked visible bells, horns, or whistles. The headlight is a detail borrowed from other Bachmann projects and is really too large, though it further "critterfies" the model. The exhaust stack is also a bit large, the prototypes being known for their short lengths of truck exhaust pipes, sometimes with flappers on top. A few had larger stacks of this sort, however, so this isn't unprototypical.

The sides of the hood have well-molded doors with latches and hinges to give it authenticity along with the rivets around the cab front. I expected to see doors out the front of the cab on both sides and a handrail along the top of the hood on each side. That latter part could be formed and added as a modeling project, along with windshield wipers and a bell behind the pilot on the left side. Very common on these little Davenports would be air reservoirs under the cab on each side, and the modeler could add those, too.

The deck surface around the hood is molded with diamond plate pattern, a very nice touch and the pilot at each end offers a three-step coupler box, similar to what was used on Bachmann's Shay. The cut bar actually lifts and pulls up the pin on the couplers, which are mounted at the same height as the Kadee, something we learned to like on the new Fn3 freight cars and the K-27 locomotive. The package includes optional drop heads for those who are standardized there.

The interior of the cab is as spartan as the rest of the locomotive, but it does have a control stand and a seat for the operator. No figures were included, but I borrowed an engineer from the many other Bachmann locos I've had around here and then put a fireman into the other side, without his shovel, to serve as a brakeman riding along, standing. The doors in the cab slide open, something I haven't seen among the photos I've viewed.

Operating the Critter

Our Davenport is a very good runner. If you view the illustrated parts break-

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I think the back end wants a headlight, too, so some issue in the future I'll do a "Thinking of DCC" on tricking out this locomotive.

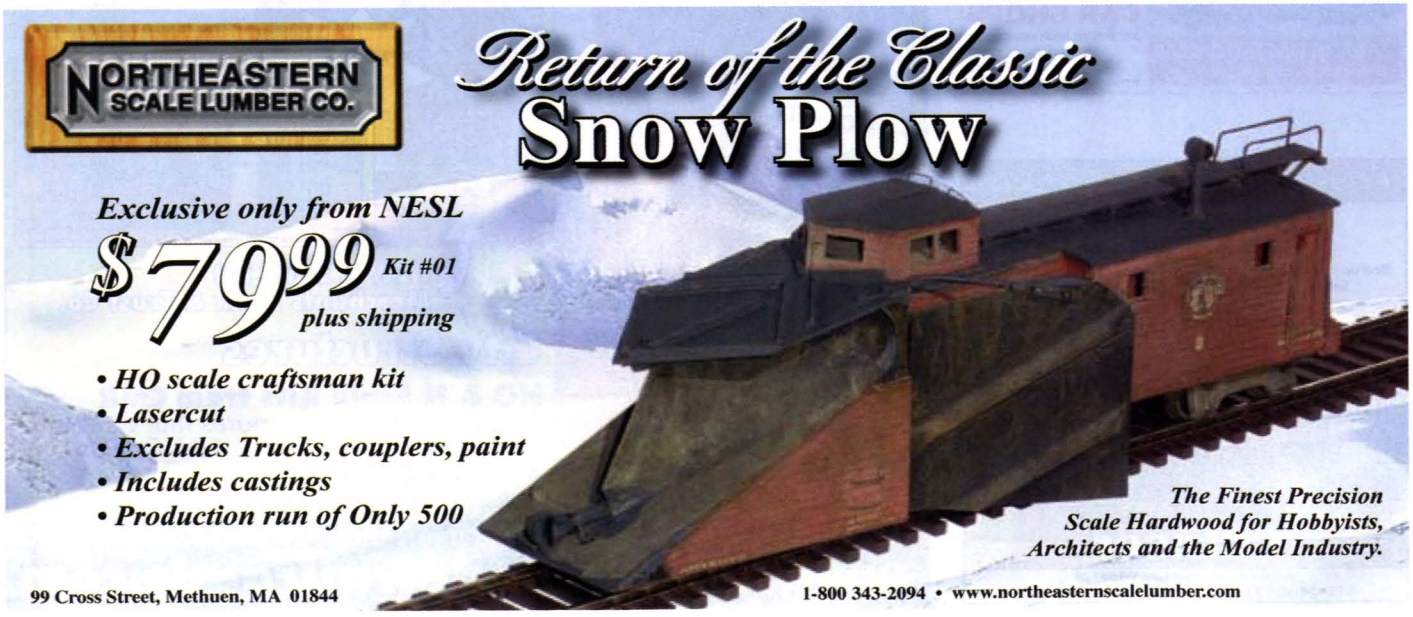
down, you can see this is a very good drive mechanism, something similar to a Shay truck with smaller-diameter wheels. As a result, this is a solid, quiet, and smooth operator. At five volts, it will get started and roll smoothly on DC power at less than two scale miles per hour (using 1:20.3). When full throttle is applied at twenty volts, the top speed is around 37 smph, a very reasonable maximum. Between ten and fifteen volts, the little rascal will give me between 5 and 20 smph and very nice siderod action. Amperage draw is very low, and that leads us to our next discovery.

If you pry off the top hatch of the hood, you will find down inside a DCC jumper board. Extract that and you have a standard NMRA 8-pin DCC socket. I have some DCC-On-Board decoders from Bachmann and quickly installed it. There is a vertical metal clip that holds the decoder in place and would also do some heat sink duty. After snapping the hood roof in place, it was back out to run under DCC.

I discovered that the good operating qualities were further enhanced by DCC. Given the dirty track, I had to provide a speed step of ten to get good, continuous movement. Where I had a relatively clean section of track, the little guy would start at speed step one and crawl very slowly.

Regardless of which power and control type I used, I found a hard little worker. The 62 ounce loco pulled around 27 ounces, giving it an almost 44 percent tractive efficiency. It consistently pulled a greater train length than the prototype. Generally, a 30 tonner would produce a tractive effort around 15,000 pounds with something like 175 horsepower. For the sake of comparison, a USRA 0-6-0 switcher weighed 81.5 tons and had a tractive effort of 39,100 pounds. The little Davenports specialized in moving short cuts, perhaps five or six loaded cars on the straight and level. I ran the little guy up my torturous 5.1 percent curve-adjusted grades, and it lifted three Fn3 freight cars from Bachmann with no real problems. In other words, you can actually switch with this Critter.

So let's talk couplers. Ever since Bachmann redesigned its coupler system, I've been a very happy camper. As updates go, this one not only offers operating compatibility with Kadees, it also preserves legacy support for the low-head standard in their immediate past. Given that the stock couplers will play with Kadees, if not magnetically, then a new owner might not bother making the change at all. Instead, I took the Critter out to Kadee where Sam Clarke did his magic. This is an important conversion for me because not only do the Kadee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A quick look underneath shows all sorts of things. There's a grill for a small speaker just behind the front coupler. The gearbox does bear some likenesses to the Shay truck, though it is really smaller.

coupler heads look more like scale in both size and form, they also work with track coupler magnets.

While Bachmann has worked hard to create a consistent and scale-height coupler standard, this particular model turned out to be rather difficult to convert. We considered a couple of different approaches, but nothing was going to be easy. Due to the three-step pocket in the pilot on each end, one was required to work back through that slot. We either would have to use the existing coupler mounting system or drill into the metal.

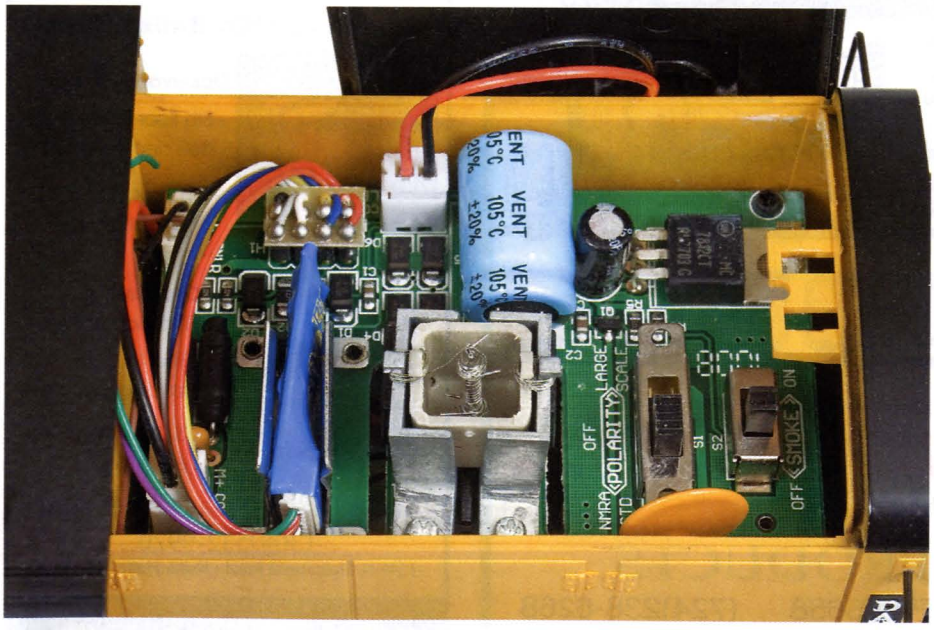
In the end, we removed the footboards and drilled up through the bottom of the coupler pockets, threading the top-most and making the lower ones large enough to accept an Allen head 440 screw. An 832 head received an internal collar in the head's mounting hole, and the original box was mounted in its customary position with a piece of plastic added to act as a striker plate. Centering springs were added, and the result works quite well. We had one of Kadee's professional machinists drill and tap the holes using an industrial drill press, so the job was done perfectly. Sam will write it up and put it online for you. Given the complication of using a drill press to precisely create the holes, you may choose to just use the stock couplers.

There is a headlight but not a reverse light, something that would be easy to do with the right DCC decoder. The light fixture on the tender of the K-27 would be perfect for this little Davenport, front and rear. While doing the wiring for the rear headlight, one could add in cab lighting and a beacon strobe on the roof. This all would require a four-function decoder, and make sure you use one that can handle two amps peak.

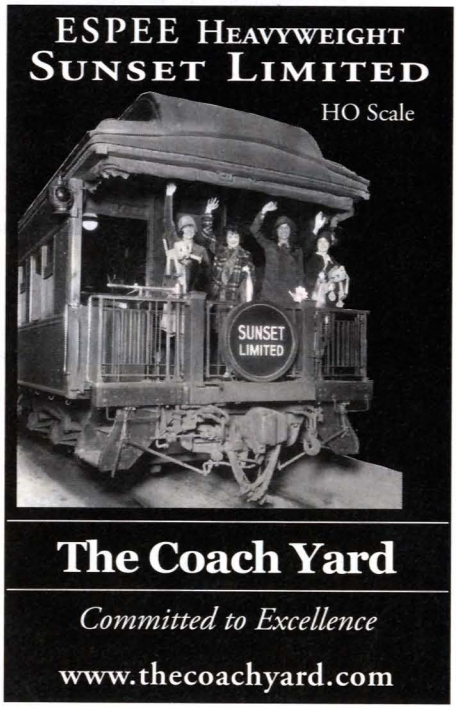
Being intensely curious about performance, I installed a Digitrax DH163P, which comes with Back EMF. I ended up with a locomotive that would step out on Speed Step One at a speed of 1.2 scale miles per hour. The DH163 series also offers easy four function access. At some future point, I plan to trick out the lighting package as I state above. This will require a four-wire bundle with a common that will attach to the blue, plus yellow for the rear headlight, green for the cab light, and purple for the beacon. As I do this, I'll probably change the headlight housing in front and use the same thing in back.

Back to Davenport

Look at a couple of dozen photos of Davenport Critters, and you'll see that they didn't remain alike very long. You can add to the lighting, put figures in the cab or along the outside, do some weathering, put accessories on the footwalks, install canvas sunshades, and put a sound system inside. The reason why you would do all this is because the little Davenport from Bachmann is worth it. It is a good, solid beginning that can be run just the way it is or made even cuter and more authentic.



The smoker in the engine compartment under the stack is the standard Bachmann offering. In front of it is the polarity switch and in front of that is the smoker switch. Behind the smoker is the DH163, sandwiched into the decoder clip. The white plug next to the 8-pin NMRA socket is the headlight feeder.



New 1,985 cubic foot two-bay hoppers from Intermountain

HO — Intermountain has released two cylindrical covered hoppers, a 4,750 cubic foot three-bay hopper, three Santa Fe refrigerator boxcars, a Maxi IV stack car, and six 1,958 cubic foot two-bay hoppers. The cars are available in six roadnumbers.

Two cylindrical covered hoppers have been released in new roadnumbers. Alberta Heritage (#45103) is decorated for ALNX, and is painted blue with gold lettering and a yellow herald. Alberta Heritage (#45104) is decorated for ALPX. It is painted blue with gold lettering and a yellow herald. The cars come equipped with etched metal roofwalks, metal wheelsets, and Kadee couplers. The hoppers retail for $29.95.

A 4,750 cubic foot hopper has been re-released for CSX (#45307), and is painted beige with black lettering. It features etched metal roofwalks, metal wheelsets, and Kadee couplers. The hopper's suggested retail price is $29.95.

Three Santa Fe refrigerator cars have been released. The *Chief West* (#46110) is painted ATSF yellow with black lettering and a black and white herald. The paint scheme highlights the "straight line map" and the *Chief West* slogan. *Super Chief* (#46113) is painted ATSF yellow with black lettering and a black and white herald. The roofwalk, ends, and underframe are all black. This paint scheme highlights the "straight line map" and the *Super Chief* slogan. *Chief West* (#46116) is painted ATSF yellow with black lettering, and a black and white herald. The roofwalk, ends, and underframe are all black. The paint scheme highlights the early "straight line map" and the *Chief West* slogan. The cars come completely assembled with finely molded details, metal wheelsets, and Kadee couplers. They retail for $29.95 each.

A new Maxi IV stack car is now available in an articulated three-car set. Each car will accept up to 53-foot containers. This model is detailed for the later version cars and is painted yellow, with lettering for DTTX. There are more than fifty etched metal and wire parts on the three-car set. The cars are equipped with metal wheel sets and Accumate scale size couplers. The stack car (#47361) retails for $89.95.

Six new 1,958 cubic foot two-bay hoppers have been released. Clinchfield (#48607) is painted black with white lettering; Pere Marquette (#48608) is painted black and decorated with white lettering; Frisco (#48609) is black with white lettering; Rock Island (#48610) is painted gray and lettered in black; Milwaukee Road (#48611) is painted gray with black lettering and red herald; and Western Maryland (#48612) is painted gray and lettered black with the "Fast Freight Line" herald. The cars have etched metal roofwalks and brake platforms. In addition, all grab irons and ladder rungs are formed metal wire. The car is equipped with metal wheelsets and Kadee scale-size couplers. The hoppers retail for $31.95 each.

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New type 30 8,000 gallon tank car from Sunshine

HO — Sunshine Models has released the General American's Type 30 8,000 gallon tank car. The kit is available with seven lettering schemes: GATC, North American, Rohm and Haas, Hercules Powder, Cosden, Cosden's "Remembering Peal Harbor," and Southern Pacific decals.

General American, along with Union Tank Car, was the largest operator of tank cars in the U.S. GATC manufacturing facilities were the largest in the U.S. In 1927, the company introduced the Type 30 tank car design. The Type 30 featured a lighter underframe construction with no side sills, poling pockets set in the ends of the bolster and a shorter but fatter dome than competitors. These cars lasted well into the 1970s.

GATX leased cars to shippers on a long-term basis and sold them to vaious others shippers and lessors. GATX painted many tank cars with the shippers' slogans and advertisements, Rohm and Haas, and Hercules Powder being two major examples.

Beginning in 1934 all tank cars were built with AB brakes, but the massive production of the late Twenties had been built with KC brakes. Over time the AB brake was applied to all Type 30s, 1953 being the final date for interchange of KC brake equipped cars.

The Rohm and Haas cars were typical of the complexities of tank car lettering. The firm owned a fleet of cars, but supplemented that fleet with cars leased from North American that were built for NATX by General American using the Type 30 design. Rohm and Haas cars were lettered in yellow with their slogan "Chemicals for Industry."

General American leased cars to Hercules Powder of Wilmington DE using the GATX reporting marks. Hercules Powder Co. was a government-mandated off-shoot of du Pont Chemical Co. Hercules specified the application of its multi-colored Hercules logo — a rendering of the character from Greek mythology, and the two color "Hercules Powder Company" name.

Cosden Petroleum of Big Spring, TX purchased numerous Type 30 tank cars from General American and placed them in its CPCX reporting marks. When German submarines closed the sea lanes from Texas to East Coast refineries in 1942, the railroads and tank car companies replaced the ocean route. To commemorate the great effort, Cosden employees painted their cars with "Remember Pearl Harbor, Fuel Oil From West Texas to Atlantic Coast" and added multi-colored American flags and stars.

North American, a smaller leasing company, purchased Type 30 tank cars and painted them with NATX, Rohm and Haas, Hercules Powder, and Cosden cars used ARA type Y trucks. These were an adaptation of the Pennsylvania 2D-F8 trucks.

The Southern Pacific purchased 50 cars in 1942 for fuel service. The cars received ARA cast side frame trucks. They came with simple SP reporting marks but in the 1950s the cars got the billboard "Southern Pacific" on the right side.

Sunshine's Type 30 tank car kits combine a plastic tank and auxiliary parts, cast resin underframe and dome, vacuum cast in gray urethane, brass tank band and stanchions, and prototypically accurate couplers. A Prototype Data Sheet, complete instructions, car diagram, and proprietary decals come with the kit. All detailing parts except trucks are included. Kits with simple lettering —GATX, NATX and Cosden —sell for $36.00 and those with complex lettering — Hercules Powder and Cosden's "Remember Pearl Harbor" are $40.00. The Rohm and Haas and Southern Pacific kits sell for $38.00. ARA Type Y white metal trucks are available for $6.00 and ARA plastic trucks with metal wheel sets are available for $5.00.

Sunshine Models, P.O. Box 4997, Springfield, MO 65808-4997; 417-831-0750

REVIEW N

Kato's GG1 caps off Broadway Limited Passenger Set

Review by Steven Goehring
Photos by Phil Scandura

137-2001 GG1 Electric Locomotive, Brunswick Green, MSRP: $139.00

Kato USA, Inc.
100 Remington Road
Schaumburg, IL 60173
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www.katousa.com

FOLLOWING their series of themed passenger trains, Kato USA has released a Pennsylvania Railroad GG1 electric locomotive as power for its matching *Broadway Limited* passenger car set. Probably from applying lessons learned from their last Japanese prototype articulated electric locomotives, Kato has produced a GG1 that looks amazing, is very flexible in operation, and runs quite smooth. The locomotive features a DCC-friendly chassis, a shock absorber design meant to maximize traction and pickup, directionally lit headlights, class lights, and number boards, and blackened metal pantographs. The mechanism is designed to negotiate 9.75-inch curves and be able to pull a full 15-car *Broadway Limited* consist up a 4 percent grade. The GG1 is decorated as Pennsylvania Railroad no. 4935, wearing the dark Brunswick Green with five gold pinstripes scheme. A second roadnumber and one roadnumber in the later Tuscan Red scheme are due in March 2009.

By-The-Numbers

PRR GG1
Kato
N 1:160 • Type: Electric
Traction Tires? Yes

Pull Power (Ozs @ Full Slip)

Pull	÷ Loco Wt	= Efficiency
0.90	4.33	20.79%

Volts	Amps
10	0.13

Analog DC

Start Volts = 1.5

Volts	Amps	Scale MPH
1.5	0.07	.08
6.0	0.13	73.53
10.0	0.16	137.87

Stall Amps: Less than 0.02

The GG1 was initially designed to take the same decoder as Kato's Mid-Production SD40-2, but this changed for the production models. Kato is currently recommending the Digitrax DN163K1D for installation in the GG1. (The SD40-2 takes a DN163K1C.) I won't be testing the GG1 on DCC since I don't operate on digital control normally, but considering the GG1's already excellent slow speed, I suspect that the only change many DCC modelers will notice would possibly be a lower top-end speed.

The GG1: Power, Durability, Beauty

If any locomotive can claim to be the best ever of its type, the GG1 is by far the best candidate among the world's electric locomotives. Measuring 79-feet 6-inches in length, the GG1 was designed to handle heavy passenger trains at high speeds between Northeastern cities. The GG1s were a big success, and their reliability was a huge asset, costing a mere 10.4 cents per mile to operate (in 1938 figures,) as opposed to 14.8 cents per mile for a weaker P5a electric and 21.5 cents for a K4 Pacific steamer. Even today, very few other locomotives can match the 50-year service life of the GG1. They were rated at 4,620 continuous horsepower with a peak of 8,500. Freight-geared GG1s could deliver 70,700 of their 477,000 pounds of weight to the rails as tractive effort, giving it a tractive efficiency of about 15 percent. This was a massively powerful locomotive for its day, compared to other passenger locomotives that were lucky to exceed 1,000 horsepower.

Finally, there is one factor largely ignored by equipment manufacturers of today, and that is appearance, an aspect that the Pennsy paid a lot of attention to on the GG1. While many people consider the famous industrial designer Raymond Loewy as the designer of the GG1's streamlined carbody, this is in fact not the case. The actual design of the GG1 carbody was the brainchild of the Pennsy's own engineering staff as a result of safety deficiencies in the old boxcab design. The incident that started the move away from boxcabs was when a P5a electric locomotive struck a truck on a grade crossing, crushing in the P5a's cab and killing the crew. P5a production came to an abrupt halt until the PRR staff came up with a safer cab design, applied to all new P5as and retrofitted on many existing boxcabs. The new center-cab body that was pioneered was also applied to experimental engines in class DD2 and R1.

For you trivia fans, the DD2 looked like a miniature GG1, with four driv-

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Designed by the Pennsylvania Railroad's own engineering department and improved with celebrity input from Raymond Loewy, the GG1 made a stunning appearance wherever it appeared, whether heading the *Broadway Limited* in 1943 or greeting visitors to the Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania in 2008. Kato's model does a fine job of capturing this unique locomotive's glamour. You can also see the pantographs' "low" position here.

ers instead of six, and the R1 had the distinction of being Pennsy's only 4-8-4 locomotive. Both units were unique experimentals that never reached production.

Not only did the GG1 reach full production, but before it did, it received an external makeover courtesy of one of the most prestigious industrial designers of the day. While many people know the name Raymond Loewy, it can be hard to put into perspective just how famous and sought-after he and his work was. He started working with the Pennsylvania Railroad in 1937, two years after the original GG1 was built. He did not actually design the GG1 carbody, but he contributed suggestions prior to the start of his formal working relationship with the Pennsy. His suggestions for the GG1 included softening the curves of the body, using welding to remove unsightly rivets, and applying a 5-pinstripe paint scheme.

Still, this mighty locomotive with aesthetic help from a famous designer would mean very little today if it weren't for its longevity. The GG1 showed up in the 1930s, 40s, 50s, and 60s as the primary electric locomotive for both freight and passenger. And despite losing its more appealing PRR paint schemes, GG1s soldiered on under Penn Central, Amtrak, Conrail, and New Jersey Transit until 1983. It wasn't mechanical failures that sidelined GG1s; it took age fractures in the frames or driving wheels to retire GG1s in any significant numbers. So they truly were as strong as steel.

Of particular interest is the unit that Kato chose to model, the 4935. It was built in the last batch of GG1s, assembled by the Pennsy's Altoona shops in 1943 with interchangeable GE or Westinghouse electrical equipment. It retained its 100 MPH passenger gearing all the way through Penn Central and into Amtrak, although it lost its beautiful pinstripes in favor of a plain black paint job with PC or Amtrak lettering. After retirement from Amtrak, 4935 was donated to the railroad Museum of Pennsylvania, where she is kept in excellent shape. I was pleasantly surprised to find that Kato was making a model of a locomotive that I have visited in person!

The Kato Model

Kato's N-scale GG1 does an excellent job of capturing the appearance of the real thing. The quality paintwork is one of the first things I noticed about this locomotive. Like the real 4935, Kato's model is glossy and dark, painted in the barely-green black color commonly known as Brunswick Green, but properly referred to as Dark Green Locomotive Enamel (DGLE.) Thankfully, the glossy surface does not pick up fingerprints and other marks very easily. The yellow lettering could use a little work, though. GG1s of this era had not plain yellow stripes, but gold leaf lettering and pinstripes, and Kato's color feels a little too bright and too yellow for me. Their rendition of the Pennsy's Clarendon font is quite accurate, but the roadnumbers are rather heavily applied and the stripes have some matching issues on the rounded corners of the engine's nose. Considering the difficulty of this paint scheme, though, Kato did a fine job

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A broadside view of the Broadway Limited's classiest head-end power! The GG1 consisted of two "G" class ten-wheeler frames articulated together under a single center-cab carbody, essentially resulting in an electric Challenger-type locomotive.

with it and their inaccuracies could be easily overlooked. Detail lettering like keystones, "F," "WATER," and "FUEL OIL" (for the steam generator,) are all brilliantly executed. Studying this paint scheme, this matches the second paint scheme applied to production GG1s. For the 4935, being very late in production, this was the as-built look, making the modeling timeframe for this unit roughly 1943 to 1955, when most GG1s were repainted with a single stripe.

As for the body details, the GG1 is marvelously done. Molded-on details like lift rings, electrical cables, roof hatches, and the side grilles are all very crisp and well defined. The paintwork is also very neat and clear over the air intake grilles. The truck sideframes are excellent too, showing off the Pennsy's typical exposed sand lines, brake cylinders, MU and brake line receptacles, and the GG1's unique driving wheel appearance. The patches of flat-finish paint on the roof give the GG1 even more appeal. This is one feature that I have never seen on any GG1 model before. Kato also did a brilliant job on the cab steps, making them all a part of the chassis' lower plastic clip. This means that the steps are very nice looking, durable, and when you remove the body shell, they stay with the chassis. On the subject of separately applied detail parts, the protective bars across the cab windows are another nice addition.

The pantographs are the best looking I've ever seen in N scale, but they do not conduct electricity. It seems that Kato, like me and most other modelers I know, has chosen to avoid using overhead catenary wires. I know that conductivity is a feature that I won't miss, especially considering that the mix of plastic and etched metal parts make for a very accurate-looking pantograph. It can be positioned in either locked down to the roof, partially raised (making it no higher than most excess height freight cars,) or fully raised. The pantograph base is also very sharp looking, with nice insulator and cable detail.

The entire pantograph is held on by friction-fit pins beneath the four roof-mounting insulators, and it can be lifted off as a single piece without danger of losing any detail parts. They could be a slightly tighter fit, but barring any really rough handling, you should never have to worry about reattaching any pantographs.

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The GG1 also does a great job of matching the prototype measurements. It is exactly 79-1/2 scale feet long in coupled length, making this one of few models I own that has proper scale length from coupler to coupler. The model's height from railhead to roof is just over 14 feet, not including the pantographs. The spacing between wheels and trucks are all correct, as is the overall width of about 10-feet 6-inches. All the intakes, sand fills, and ladder parts are all present in the correct locations.

Kato did get one detail wrong but, fortunately, it's easy to fix. In looking at a floor plan of the GG1's equipment, it is apparent that the fuel oil bunkers and steam generator were on the same end. That makes sense, since the fuel was for the steam generator. Checking the Kato model, though, the steam generator exhaust stack is on the opposite side as the "FUEL OIL" fill lettering! The fix for this issue was amazingly easy. First, remove the shell by inserting toothpicks into all four corners just under the cab side windows. Be sure to push the headlight glazing out away from the chassis, since that is what holds the body on. Then, being careful not to damage the chassis-mounted cab steps, lift the shell off, but don't pull down on the trucks as these can pop out easily!

Use pliers to grip the frame or something unobtrusive like that. Once you have the shell off, look on the roof where the cab roof detail insert is mounted. Push its four clips out from the underside and look at the mounting clips. The clips on one end are longer than the other end; trim about a third of the inside of the longer clips off so that they will fit into the smaller clips' holes. Now replace the roof piece, but "backwards," with the steam generator exhaust facing the side with the "FUEL OIL" stencils. Replace the body shell on the mechanism and you're done; it's fixed.

Although the pantographs do not pick up overhead current, they are easier to pose than most other model pantographs. No pins or sticky contacts; the pantograph can be easily moved from one position to another by simply pulling it up or pushing it down. Here, they are shown fully extended, but they can also be extended to a "low" setting that makes the GG1 no taller than an ordinary boxcar. Catenary operators should remember that the trade-off for this easy posing is that there is little to no upward tension on the pantograph, making overhead wire operations impossible with the factory pantographs.

All of the GG1's wheels matched the NMRA Mark IV standards gauge, but you should be careful when running the GG1 with one or both pantographs fully extended, as this pushes the model height significantly beyond the recommended clearances on the standards gauge. I had no problems running it on Code 55 track from various manufacturers thanks to Kato's low-profile wheel flanges. The couplers were also nicely in line with the Micro-Trains coupler height gauge. I did find a problem that caused one end of the GG1 to ride higher than the other. It gave the illusion of the couplers being out of alignment, but the standards gauge proved that this was not the case. I did some investigating and found that the spring that keeps the idler trucks on the track was too strong on one end. I removed it easily and cut about 2 rings of spring off the end. I could have taken more to make it perfectly level, but the GG1 looks balanced enough for me now.

Get Going!

I couldn't wait to road test the GG1. Before I did the actual run tests, I put the 4935 on a road switch job on my compact railroad just to see how she performed in a role that GG1s would logically never have been assigned. Although jumpy and

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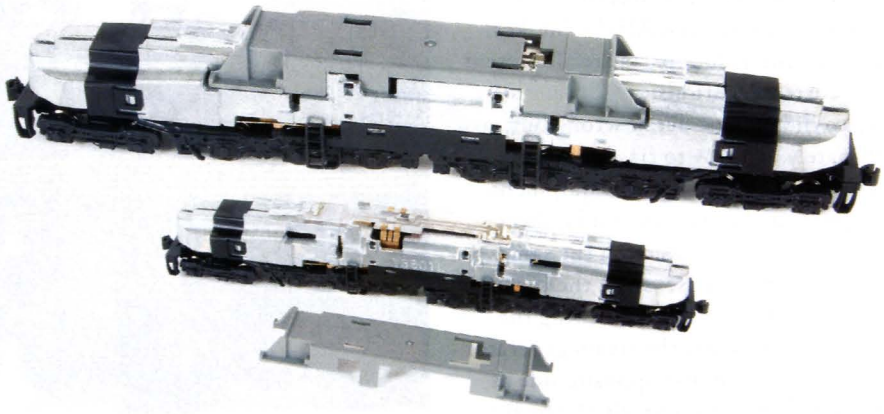
This picture almost captures the flexibility of the GG1's drive mechanism. Drawing from their experience with Japanese articulated electrics, Kato has done a great job on making the GG1 deliver power and pick up electricity regardless of grades and mediocre trackwork.

slightly inconsistent at low speeds, the GG1 never stalled out and had no problems whatsoever with the 8.5-inch curves leading to the staging yard. In fact, while any comparably sized standard diesel locomotive would have derailed its train around such a tight curve, the articulated-frame-mounted couplers had no problems with excessive swing in curves.

Unfortunately, Kato's knuckle couplers are not smoothly compatible with Micro-Trains, McHenry, or Accumate couplers. When trying to switch industries with the GG1, I had to use an uncoupler pick to guide every coupling, uncoupling, and delayed-uncoupling movement. Considering that the GG1 is decidedly not a switcher, most modelers will have few problems with the slightly incompatible couplers.

The GG1 coupler tended to stick in the open position, leaving whatever car to which it was coupled free to roll away. Because of the tight fit between Kato's and the other N knuckle couplers, none of the other brands will easily uncouple because of this flaw, but beware of sudden backup moves if the car immediately behind the GG1 has a Kato coupler. Converting the Katos to Micro-Trains shouldn't be that hard, since the articulated trucks can be removed safely and an appropriate drop-in replacement for the Kato couplers could be put together from most of the other kits designed to replace truck-mounted Rapido couplers.



The GG1's mechanism is typical of Kato quality: quiet, smooth, and reliable, if a bit fast at top end speeds. Note how the cab ladders are a part of the frame itself; be careful when removing the body shell! For you DCC operators, take a look at the GG1's light board with the cab interior insert removed. You can replace this board with a Digitrax DN163K1D mobile decoder.

I put together a track featuring curves in both directions, a steep grade, and turn radii from 13 to 8-1/2 inch. Setting up as many freight cars as I could spare, I put the GG1 to work, and she never complained. Grades? No biggie, 4935 just slowed down a bit and sped up slightly on the downgrade. With nearly a full ounce of pull strength, I would expect great hauling performance like this. As with the road switching job, the GG1 had no issues with sharp curves here either, or negotiating curved downgrades, S-bends, and so on. The Kato GG1 was more than up to any challenges I had in store. I have heard buyers complain of lost tires, but if you expect to be handling the GG1 roughly or if you know you have bad luck with tires, try lifting the tire with a pin and applying a drop of super glue at several points.

Summing It All Up

So I stand by my assertion that Kato has released a winner of a locomotive. The GG1 measures up very well in running quality and pull strength and it looks amazing. Despite its minor shortcomings of unpowered pantographs and sometimes-incompatible couplers, the GG1's numerous innovative features make it worthy of operations on any layout. I thoroughly enjoyed trying to push this fine model to its limits and finding it better than my expectations. Another winner from Kato!

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REVIEW HO

BLI re-releases C30-7 in its Blueline

Review and Photos by John Sipple

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BROADWAY Limited's Blueline is here in Santa Fe Blue & Yellowbonnet along with the Kodachrome SPSF versions. It is also offered in the L&N "Family Lines," BN, NS, and UP, along with an undecorated version. All have Sound and DC plus readiness to add DCC operation with your choice of motor decoders from your favorite DCC vendor.

C30-7 and Kodachrome

It all began when Burlington Northern was assembled out of Burlington, Great Northern, Northern Pacific, and SP&S. This created the largest railroad in America, the first real super-railroad. Western railroads have always been large, but this threatened all the rest and also signaled that the ICC was letting mergers take place. Meanwhile, both Milwaukee and Rock Island both rolled over and died, sending a chill through the railroading world.

Southern Pacific and Santa Fe decided it would be a fine thing if they merged. This would let each one get into the other's markets while possibly consolidating some of the common routes. BN had done this in many cases, so this all seemed possible. So possible; in fact, that they signed intents and began designing a new common paint job for the Southern Pacific Santa Fe Railroad. A legion of other railroads didn't like this and complained to the Interstate Commerce Commission.

Since this wasn't a done deal, the paint jobs would have to be functional for each railroad but quickly mergable. The result was the paint scheme so colorful that only one name would do: Kodachrome. It bore some Warbonnet similarities back from the yellow cab, though the main hood was red and black. Bright yellow letters were strategically spaced, "SP" on the Southern Pacific locos and "SF" on the Santa Fe. These were located so that the other two letters could be added when the deal was done. The West would become blanketed with Kodachrome SPSF locomotives. This caused some rail pundits to joke that SPSF stood for "Shouldn't Paint So Fast."

That turned out to be eerily ironic. ICC refused to seal the deal. Hindsight is 20-20, and ICC's refusal to allow this merger was not good for Santa Fe, but it turned out to be a near-death-sentence for Southern Pacific. Santa Fe would go on to merge with Burlington Northern to form BNSF while Southern Pacific would merge with Rio Grande and then

By-The-Numbers

C30-7
Broadway Limited Imports, LLC
HO 1:87 • Type: Diesel
Traction Tires? No

Pull Power (Ozs @ Full Slip)

Pull	÷	Loco Wt	=	Efficiency
3.6		18.4		19.6%
Volts		Amps		
16		0.46		

Analog DC

Start Volts = 9.7

Volts	Amps	Scale MPH
9.7	0.28	8
13.0	0.32	69
16.0	0.31	92

DCC

Stall Amps: (Not applicable)

Speed	Step (of 128)	Scale MPH
Min	1	2
Mid	63	73
Top	128	105

The age of the arch-topped roofs was about over when the Dash Sevens came to market. Most of Santa Fe's C30s had the nose headlight space bolted over by the Kodachrome days. The step-out in the side of the hood down the letter "S" is a prime spotting sign for the C30-7.

The roofline of the C30-7 was remarkably smooth and clean, a feature that didn't last long in future releases. I maintain Santa Fe painted the glare panel atop the nose black, not white. Having viewed hundreds of SPSF Kodachromes, I have yet to see one that was white.

Hood grills were painted black for maintenance reasons, but they look great on the model. By the SPSF days, the cab roof was no longer bare. Radio antenna platforms joined horns and other stuff.

get swallowed up by Union Pacific. Meanwhile, ICC was criticized so heavily for its decision regarding SPSF, it was disbanded by Congress and the Surface Transportation Board was created to replace it.

Broadway Limited and the C30-7

I consider the C30-7 to be one of the most pleasant and attractive diesel locos built. It has a simple roofline, a cute little stubby nose, and only slightly winged radiators. The Santa Fe bought number 8018 new in December 1977 with builder number 41671. In 1992, fifteen years later, it was retired and sold, ending up at Conrail as number 506 for a few more years. The C30 was mostly not considered to be worth rebuilding, a common fate among GE diesels, and so after the initial 15 year lease period, most of them lived on borrowed time.

The merger proposal came in 1983 and painting began some time after that. Many of the locomotives were repainted back to their original paint after the merger was denied, but some went to the BNSF merger still in their Kodachrome paint, and some of the C30-7s were among that group. Of the 88 C30-7s numbered from 8010 to 8098, all were retired by June 1994. Some 68 units in the 8099 and up classes were still on the roster when the BNSF merger took place as of December 1995.

The first time I reviewed the C30-7 from Broadway Limited, it was a BLI release wearing CSX number 7000. This model has drawn a lot of service, in part because I like the C30-7 and the rest because it's a good model that runs well with excellent sound. As I found out back then, BLI tends to make one version and paint it for the various roads without worrying regarding road-specific detail. Headlight placement varied among locomotives over service life, sometimes found on the eyebrow and sometimes on the nose. This one models a sealed-up nose that used to have a headlight which has been moved to the eyebrow.

Santa Fe never met a cab roof it didn't want to adorn with everything from flashing beacons to antennae to air conditioners. As a result, the horns could be found on the front of the roof or back on the engine compartment. Our sample's roof is completely unadorned, giving you a blank slate for your modeling passions. Most had anti-climbers that aren't present here, something else for you to do. The anticlimber was not universal throughout C30-7 Land, so don't beat yourself up over it.

The general paint is both accurate and well done. Masking is very sharp, and the minimal lettering is laser-crisp. The number boards on the prototype have white letters on a red background, and the numbers are bright white even during the day. Our sample has visible numbers against a black background — something that also happened with the prototype — that aren't very bright until the loco's lights are powered.

The only part of the decoration with which I take issue is the panel atop the nose just in front of the windshields. They have rendered this in white, and when I asked, they said that was the correct paint for it. I've seen hundred of photos and quite a few gave peeks at the glare panel, and the Kodachrome is black while the yellow and blue warbonnets had the dark body blue in that place. This can be corrected quickly with flat black paint, so it's no big thing.

By the time these girls were repainted into Kodachrome between 1985 and 1986, their class lights had been removed and most evidence of them was gone, though our sample still has them. I especially like the way the hood grilles are done in black, just as the prototypes had them. The footwalks all have diamond-plate texture, and the sunshades are already installed. As happened on the Santa Fe, the two small cab windows on each side were closed up and plated over, and the model doesn't have them either. It does have a very nice snow plow, however.

The C30-7 sure looks long, but it was actually a foot and seven inches shorter than an SD40-2! Part of this is a sort of optical illusion because the cab is so far forward. This makes the nose short and the long hood much longer.

Operation

With the outward model as well done on the Blueline as it was on the original BLI version, we'll have to compare operation and sound. The first comparison is that the Blueline arrives only DCC-ready, though it runs fine in DC power. So it was time to photograph it first and then test it with DC. Broadway Limited maintains that most of their customers run these machines under DC-only.

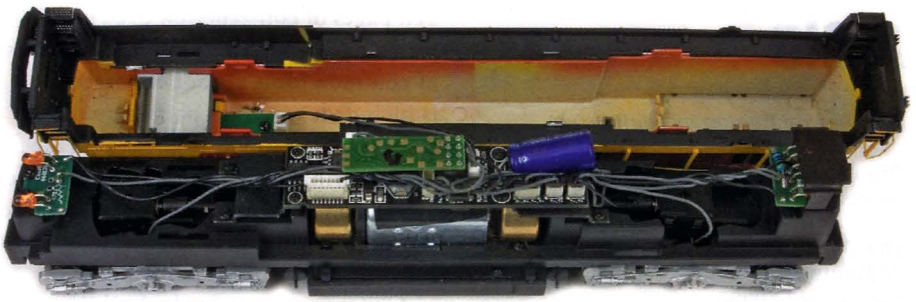
The next comparison is with the sound under DC. The new Blueline is both louder (it can be turned down if you wish) and more authentic. When the 3,000 horse FDL-16 was a very smooth-runner, it sounded like what it was: an industrial power plant. When it was in need of some care, they could also be chuggy and guttural, but BLI has chosen the sound of the GE FDL when in top condition. This is a turbocharged four-stroke, and so the sound of specific pistons exhausting is obscured by the turbo.

The horn is quite similar to the original BLI/QSI version, though not quite the same pitch. This is a good-sounding multi-chime horn, and the bell is excellent. The sequencing of the sound with the movement under DC isn't perfect, the locomotive starting to roll before the engine notches up, but this again is minor.

I was able to use DC power to start the locomotive at around eight scale miles per hour at around 9.7 volts. At 13 volts, it turned up around 73 and then at a top power setting of 16 volts, I found a top speed of 105. The throttle stepped up as speed was increased.

Going to DCC

With the Blueline, you must add a motor decoder if you want to really operate under DCC. The sound system will operate with DCC without the motor decoder but don't expect the loco to go anywhere. To add the new decoder, you need to select one of the suggested



The little green board on top is the Digitrax DN143IP decoder in place. The wires to the shell are for the headlight illumination. The two LEDs on the front of the frame are for the class lights in the nose.

mobile decoders from the list inside the included manual. I chose the Digitrax DN143IP because it includes Back EMF.

Installation requires removal of the shell, and that means removing the couplers, since they hold the shell on. Pull out gently on the pilot at each end to help coax the shell to release. Wires run from the main factory decoder board to the eyebrow light. These two wires terminate in a plug to the board along with two more wires. Remove the dummy plug and then coax this four-pin plug out of its socket and move it to the socket to the rear of the eight-pin NMRA socket. This allows the motor decoder to control the lights. If you don't move it, the sound decoder will handle the lights.

This decoder goes in quite nicely with the included jumper extender; point the long end toward the front. Right out of the box, the combination of the loco and the decoder started at two scale miles per hour, very good. Top end and middle performance was comparable to the DC numbers. After the testing, I set CV5 to 140 and CV6 to 70 and got a loco that ran top speed at 78 and mid-speed at 38. Much better.

One odd development was the rear number board lights lit up and showed through the plastic, even though the Santa Fe version never had rear number boards. While I was installing the decoder, I resolved the matter with a couple of small squares of black electrical tape over the vestigial number boards on the inside. The class light front and back still operate, not prototypical but fun anyway.

Kodachrome, it gives you those nice, bright colors

I'm one of those who like the Kodachrome paint job, and I think the C30-7 is a handsome machine. All of those properties are captured in this model with lots of excellent detail and very solid performance. I like the sound, though I may turn it down some.

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REVIEW HO

Tappan - An Ornate Suburban Station in HO scale

Review and Photos by Rich Cobb

Tappan Station (Footprint: 4 inches x 5 inches), MSRP: $119.95

The Old and Weary Car Shop
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www.theoldandwearycarshop.com

THE New York, West Shore and Buffalo railroad was built in the late 1800s to compete with the New York Central, and a contract was placed to build the Tappan station in 1883. At least eight other stations along the line were built from the same plans, but in a mirror image with the waiting room to the right. The West Shore eventually fell victim to a merger and became a part of the New York Central railroad. The tracks are still there, now operated by CSX and also used by New Jersey Transit, but the station is long gone.

The Model

The kit was produced for the Old and Weary Car Shop by Branchline Trains and these guys have outdone themselves in creating an outstanding kit. It consists of laser-cut wood parts, window glazing, and strips of diamond shaped laser-cut heavy paper for the roof shingles. Eight pages with many photos from different eras are devoted to the various stations built from these plans: excellent research. Ten pages of construction drawings provide clear building instruction. A list of common tools needed for assembly is included, as well as painting suggestions. I used a single-edge razor blade for most cutting, rather than a hobby knife with a No. 11 blade. Elmers White Glue was used in construction, and paints are Floquil solvent-based paints.

Construction starts by building an inner shell of plywood, followed by the outer wall material and then the trim. I assembled three kits at the same time, and managed to make the same errors on all three. The plywood parts for the shell have peel-and-stick on one side: those sides are shaded gray in the drawings and have to face the outside of the building. I found I needed to remove the paper backing on the tabs to get them to fit in the slots. I used a small square to keep the parts square while the glue was drying.

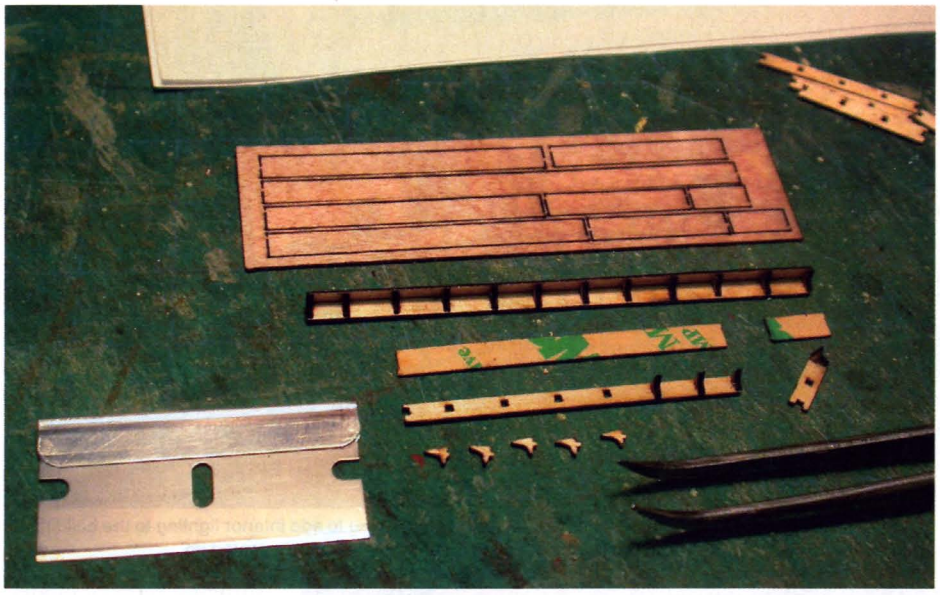
When adding the floor, make sure the overhang is positioned toward the track side of the building: I got them all backwards, which meant the posts on the waiting room didn't have any support under them — we'll take care of that later on. Once the inner shell is completed, it's time to add the outer walls. Follow the instructions and apply the lower clapboard siding, followed by the upper decorative panels.

Once everything is together, the building was spray painted with No. 87 Depot Buff. While the paint was drying, I removed all the parts from the trim sheet. You can paint them before removing them, but many of the edges won't get painted, and have to be touched up later. The inner door panels and the "fans" should be painted Depot Buff; the window frames No. 25 Tuscan; and the trim parts No. 48 Coach Green. The parts were sorted by color, fastened to sticky side up masking tape on pieces of cardboard, and sprayed the appropriate color.

While the paint was drying, I skipped ahead in the instructions and put together the distinctive Yankee Gutters. You'll need a pair of tweezers, glasses, and patience; these parts are small! It'd be a good idea to sweep the floor in your work area if it's anything like mine, in case any of the pieces take off for parts unknown. A few extra brackets are thoughtfully included, but why take chances?

Position the backing board with the square holes with the thinner edge away from you, pick up a bracket with the angle facing away from you, put a dab of glue on the peg, and insert it in the square hole. The backing board and the bracket form almost a right angle. Put

Under Construction: This image shows the depot in various stages of construction. The left kit shows the basic shell put together. The center building has the lower walls completed. On the right the upper walls have been added.



Building the Yankee Gutters is a lesson in patience. There are numerous small parts, but if you are careful and take your time, they'll look gorgeous once they're finished.

on the peel-and-stick face board, and make sure all the brackets are square before the glue dries. While I was at it, I removed the 26 corbel halves from the same sheet and glued them together. Place one half face down with an edge against a metal block, and glue on the other half face up; this will assure at least one edge will be square. The finished pieces (gutters, corbels, and roof trim) were sprayed Coach Green.

Now back to the building. Before you go too much further, you should decide if you want to detail the interior, and/or add lights. There're a lot of windows, but shades will help hide the fact that the interior is empty. Since the floor edge under the waiting room is visible, I painted it No. 16 Aged Concrete. The trim was added next, following the steps outlined in the instructions; everything fit just right. Doors and windows were added next. The windows can be assembled closed or partly open. Note that the upper pane in each window is slightly taller than the lower pane: work carefully and get the parts right. When you install the windows, the two double windows in step 11 are slightly wider than those in steps 9 and 10. When you get to the operator's room left wall trim and window, insert the window in the opening before putting on the trim. You might be able to get the window in after the trim is in place, but I couldn't; I finally had to remove the trim, put in the window, and then reapply the trim.

The second floor telegraph operator's bay window is next: the parts are fragile. The posts are next on the trackside waiting room: the thick posts and frieze go on first. Thin overlay posts of two styles are provided, those with "fans" were on the prototype as built, but were later removed, leaving plain posts: take your pick.

I added window shades cut from green construction paper to all the windows. A floor between the first floor ticket office and the second floor telegraph room was cut from cardboard, and a grain of wheat bulb installed to light the first floor room. A cardboard ceiling with a light was also put over the waiting room. Once the roofs are on, you'll be out of luck if you decide you want lights in any of the rooms.

Next are the sub-roof pieces — these were all spray painted Coach Green before assembly. Not all roof edges have trim pieces applied over them, so I recommend sanding the edges to make them take paint better. Note: raw laser-cut edges tend to soak up paint like a sponge and require two or three coats for good coverage. Install the sub-roof pieces in the steps shown in the instructions, and use weights and masking tape to hold them while the glue dries.

Next come the corbels and trim pieces: when all the glue is dry, touch up any bare spots. When adding the diamond shaped shingles you should start with the waiting room roof, then move on to the rear roof over the lady's room, finishing up with the highest roof over the telegraph room. There are two ways to shingle roofs: cut each piece to the exact length before gluing on, or cut them long and trim them later with flush cutting rail nippers. I cut each piece to the correct angle for the valleys but left them a bit long on the other end and trimmed them after each sub roof was covered. By using the starter strip at the lower edge of each roof, you'll end up with a slight curve in the roofline above the second row of shingles. This will be mostly hidden by the Yankee gutters, but if it bothers you, cut a starter strip from thin paper; it'll be painted over later anyway. I did this on one station, but unless you look very closely, you can't tell the difference.

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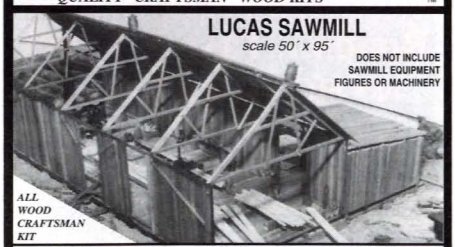

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Once the walls have been built, and before you add the roof, it's time to apply the trim. This detail gives the building a very asthetic appearance. At this point, you'll also want to decide if you're going to add interior lighting to the building as it's virtually impossible to do after the building is sealed up.

All three depots are finished and ready to be placed trackside. The Tappan Depot may have been built as a commuter station for NYC, but similar structures could be found along the Hudson and in other areas across the nation.

Rather than try to leave a 1/32-inch gap at each roof peak for the trim, I ran the shingles one row above the peak and then trimmed it off when the glue had dried. I scribed a piece of left over starter strip down the middle, folded it in half, and glued it on as a roof cap. I'm thinking the idea was for the trim piece to fit down in the gap so that only the vertical end pieces are visible, but it doesn't look bad with the trim board running along the roof cap. Don't be in a rush with the shingles; roofs of model buildings are usually the most visible, so get things straight. You're looking at about four hours to do all the roofs.

The chimney was installed next: I used a fine hacksaw blade to cut the correct angle, and super glue made a strong joint. A thin bead of white glue applied with the tip of a No. 11 blade around the base to fill any gaps — when painted black, it'll look like tar. You can also run a bead of white glue down the valleys if the shingles have any gaps. The roofs are painted next: I used No. 186 Oxide Red. Be sure to paint all the edges; you don't want any of the gray paper showing.

Getting back to the goof-up with the floor: I wanted a floor under the ticket

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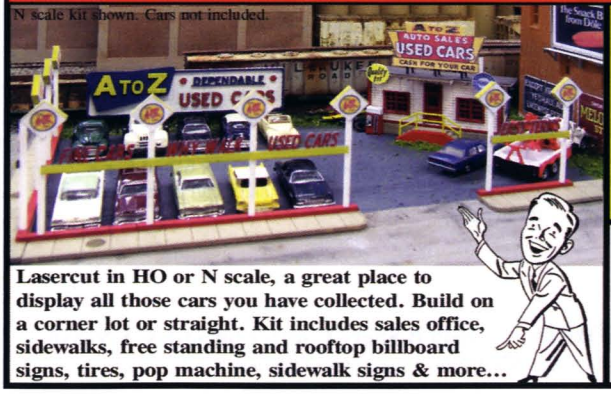
N scale kit shown. Cars not included.



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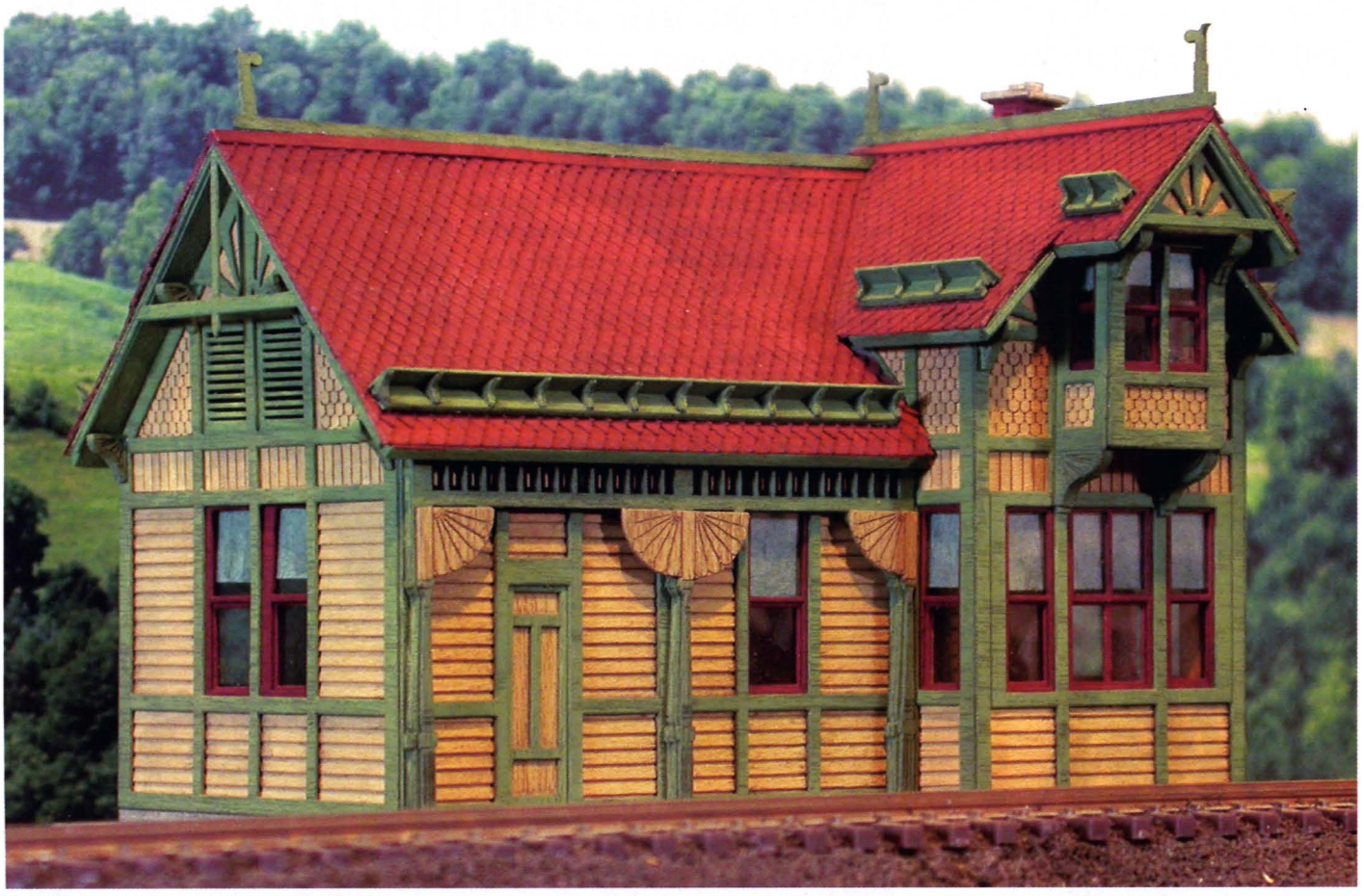

Ready for the morning rush hour, the Tappan Depot is a guaranteed eye catcher for any late 1800s and early 1900s HO-scale layout.

office and lady's room as well, and I like to have a concrete or stone foundation under my buildings to make scenery installation easier. I pre-painted some 1/16-inch by 1/4-inch strip wood Aged Concrete, and cut pieces to go around the building, using mitered corners, and leaving about 3/16-inch exposed outside the building. Small blocks under the posts on the waiting room wall took care of having the floor installed the wrong way. Floors were cut from cardboard and installed.

The Yankee gutters were next. I found one gutter on the Lady's room roof was a bit too long; however, cutting off one section took care of that. Once everything had dried, the entire station was given a thin wash of an ink/alcohol mix to give it a "less than new look." Various signs are included in the kit.

Overall Impressions

This is an outstanding kit, from the engineering and fine details to the research and easy-to-understand instructions. The only improvement I could suggest is to use a red-colored construction paper for the laser-cut shingles rather than gray; that would make painting the edges of the shingles unnecessary. Although Tappan was mostly a commuter station for New York City over the years, similar stations were used at places along the Hudson north to Albany, and also west towards Buffalo, so it can be used in many applications on your layout. Construction time was difficult to estimate since I built three kits at once, but you're probably looking at 25 hours of modeling enjoyment.

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New imported goods from Reynaulds

Z, N, HO, O — Reynaulds has recently imported some new products from MBZ in Germany.

The first new item is a River lock (#R10177) that is 100 by 60 by 40 millimeters and retails for $35.71. The next item is a US windmill (#R10176) that measures 43 by 38 by 135 millimeters and retails for $36.23. Another new item is Cow Piles (#R80097) that retail for $4.64 for fifteen pieces. Finally, the last new item is a detailed birdhouse, which measures 16 by 16 by 50 millimeters and retails for $10.33.

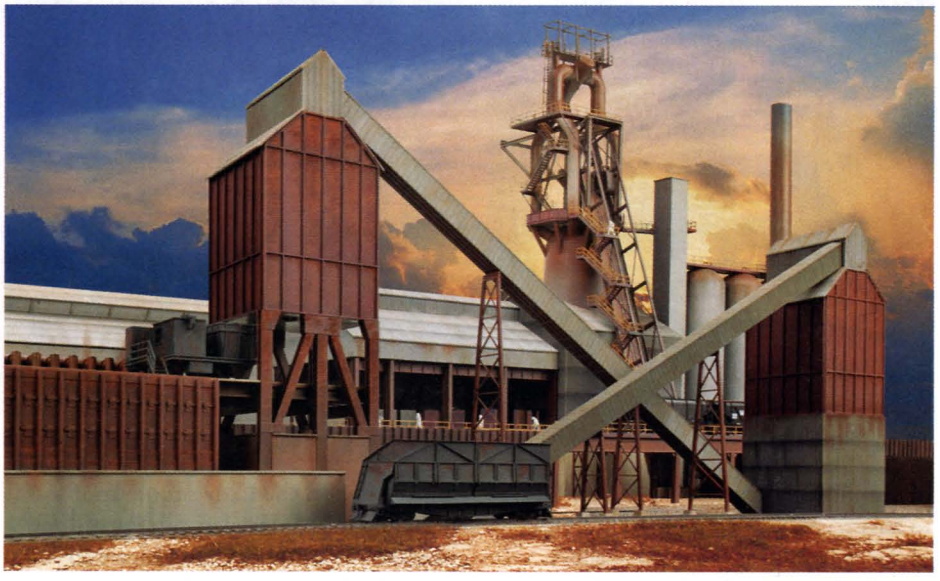
Reynaulds Euro Imports, Inc., 41 W 245 Prairie View Lane, Elburn, IL 60119-9167; Fax: 630-365-6384; 630 365-6345; E-mail: rocousa@roco.com; www.euro-trains.com

Pond Scum adds life-like colors to lakes and rivers

ALL— Timberline Scenery has introduced their new product, Pond Scum. It is a new color that takes the guesswork out of coloring ponds, lakes, and rivers. Available in two sizes, the 8 oz. bottle retails for $5.98 and a 16 oz. bottle is available for $7.49.

Timberline Scenery, P.O. Box 57, Platteville, CO 80651; 970-785-0321; E-mail: jim@timberlinescenery.com; www.timberlinescenery.com

New steel structure series from Walthers



Walthers is releasing the Ashland Iron & Steel series of kits and cars that will create a complete steel complex. New offerings will be available each month through July 2009.

HO — Walthers is releasing Ashland Iron & Steel series of structures. Subsequent releases of products such as the Hulett Unloader and Blower Engine House combined with updated versions of popular models and reissues of hard-to-find kits needed to build a steel industry have also been announced.

Steel facilities are some of the most fascinating — and dangerous — places on earth, and no other industry relies more heavily on rail transportation. Heavy-duty ore cars haul raw materials to the dock. Massive Huletts unload arriving ships piling ore in heaps at the plant or into waiting hoppers. Blast furnaces rise like giants into the sky and rolling mills stretch a mile long. Slag cars, hot metal bottle cars, and quench cars work the line while coil cars, covered gondolas, and flat cars leave with the finished product. A steel facility is hot, noisy, and filled with activity, which makes steel a favorite industry of model railroaders.

Beginning in January, Walthers released the Coke Oven & Quench Tower Kit (#933-2972) which retails for $129.98. Other kits will be made available subsequently throughout the beginning of the year. The Gold Line slag car (#932-3142) is expected in February and will be priced at $29.98 for a single car and $84.98 for a 3-pack, a Gold Line Michigan-style ore car 12-pack (#932-40501) is expected in April for $169.98, a blast furnace kit (#933-2973) will release in April for $239.98, a Gold Line bottle car (#932-3132) is also expected in April for $31.98 as a single car and $89.98 for a 3-pack, a rolling mill kit (#933-2971) is expected in May at $159.98, a Hulett unloader kit (#933-2966) is set to release in June for $169.98, a blower engine house kit (#933-2957) should be available in July at $149.98; a blower engine house piping kit (#933-2958) is also expected in July and will retail for $39.98.

Walthers, P.O. Box 3039, Milwaukee, WI 53201-3039; 800-487-2467; Fax: 800-807-2647; www.walthers.com

Fos Scale releases new manufacturing plant

H.T. Gordon's manufactures unmentionables for women. The limited edition HO-scale kit may also be used as a Textile plant.

HO — H.T. Gordon's is a brassieres & corset mill manufacturing elastics and intimate apparel for ladies. This industry demands shipments of raw materials including rubber, metal wire, nylon, rayon, plastics, and more. During wartime, in particular WWII, H.T. Gordon's and other brassiere manufacturers switched gears to produce much needed rubber gas masks and parachutes.

H.T. Gordon's is so proud of their products that they can be purchased right on the premises in their company store, H.T. Gordon's Unmentionables. Quality brassieres and lingerie can be purchased in a clean, classy atmosphere. It's nothing like that lewd car wash down the road where Mr. Deignan hires bikini clad girls to wash cars, and it's nothing like that crass, gruff truck stop down by the interstate. It's the prefect place for ladies to shop; or gentlemen, to find that perfect gift for the Missus.

H.T. Gordon's is a single structure measuring 5 inches wide by 14 inches long. It includes the attached Company Store and Mill Building, and features a rail served loading dock as well as a truck dock. Walls are laser-cut aged clapboard; with some board and batten. Roofing includes laser-cut shingles, corrugated metal and rolled roofing. Vintage color billboards and signs are included. Plastic windows, metal and plastic details, weathering and assembly instructions are also included. Not included: Figures, Scenery, Vehicles, and Stone Wall. The kit also includes a second set of signage, H.T. Gordon's Textiles for those wishing to use the structure for other purposes. The limited edition kit retails for $249.95.

Fos Scale Limited, PO Box 1321, Pawcatuck, CT 06379; 914-835-0680; Fax: 914-835-0680; E-mail: foslimited@aol.com; www.foslimited.com

The North Bank Line

Western Pacific 201 and 206 class 2-6-6-2s

206 class #210
NBL #WP -1.3

Circa 1951; Elesco feedwater heater, snow plow pilot, pilot mounted air tank, long air tank on fireman's side, small ladders ahead of low pressure cylinders, 12,000 gallon tender with 'dog house'.

The need for heavier mainline power led the W.P. Railroad to purchase two groups of 2-6-6-2 type locomotives. The first group, consisting of five locomotives (#201-#205), was built in 1917. These were followed by five virtually identical locomotives (#206-#210) in 1924. They were originally intended primarily for service through California's Feather River Canyon between Oroville and Portola. However, after 1931 they mainly worked the 'Inside Gateway' between Keddie and Bieber, California. The North Bank Line is planning to produce 3 versions of these unique little Western Pacific gems. **All will be factory-finished in HO scale brass.**

206 class #207
NBL #WP-1.2

Circa 1941, Elesco feedwater heater, snow plow pilot, no pilot mounted air tank, long air tank on fireman's side, small ladders ahead of low pressure cylinders, 12,000 gallon tender without 'dog house'.

(NBL #WP -1.1 not shown)
201 class #201

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Cover Story

REVIEW HO

Walthers' Everett Street Station

Building a Magnificent Terminal

Review and Photos by Stephen Priest

933-2943 Everett Street Station & Train Shed, Cornerstone Series, Limited Run, MSRP: $249.98
933-2943 Train Shed, Cornerstone Series, MSRP: $99.98

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THE Milwaukee Road's Everett Street Station was a local landmark in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, from 1886 to 1964. This depot was designed and built in the High Victorian Gothic Revival style. Inspired by medieval castles and cathedrals, such designs featured strong, vertical lines that made buildings seem taller, heavy masonry construction, bold details, buttresses, windows with pointed arches, pinnacles, and gables. To further capture public attention and add additional height, this design incorporated an imposing clock tower, complete with four clocks, which stretched well above the main structure.

Both fired red brick and heavy cut stone were used as the primary exterior surface cladding. The Walthers station is a simplified version of the actual structure representing only the center portion of the building. Rumor has it that Walthers may produce the two end sections that are not present in the kit further enhancing the building and adding to its already impressive size.

This imposing three-story structure shared many design elements with similar stations built in other medium and large American cities in this era. Because of this I decided to use it as the main passenger terminal building for our club layout. A variety of trains can be operated in and out of the facility while keeping with prototype practices and remaining within the realm of realistic/believable modeling. Our space was limited, so I chose to elevate the structure so it became the focal point of the city. The train shed and tracks are located below and off to one side of the station. They are reached by underground walkways and freight elevators.

The kit is designed to be assembled in two ways. Both are prototypical but the main tower section can be assembled as-built or in an abbreviated form. The prototype depot received its tower-dectomy as a result of a structural failure in the tower that forced the removal of the upper (heavy) portion of the tower. The clocks were lowered and repositioned in the remaining portion of the tower at that time. A flat roof was added to the structure in lieu of the once-magnificent tower. I chose to build the more ornate and interesting version of the structure that includes the tall pointed tower.

The train shed is designed to represent a wrought iron structure with a heavy fireproof roof and a smoke venting clerestory. The immense size of this shed allows it to encompass up to six tracks; however, I only placed five within its shelter. Although the shed is prototypical in it appearance I personally find it to be very difficult to appreciate the ornate ironwork that lurks under the imposing expanse of roof. No fault of Walthers here, as they simply produced a prototypical structure. If two or more of the sheds are used it is quite possible to lose a single locomotive or an entire train under the shed!

Assembly

These kits proved to be a challenge. They are well designed and the parts fit together tightly, but they are large and complex. You will not sit down and finish this one in an hour and I would not recommend that anyone unfamiliar with kit construction tackle this station. It is not a good choice for that first building! Despite the careful packaging I had a little trouble with some warped pieces; this is most likely due to the number of part sprues that are stacked in the boxes as shipped. The warping probably happened over time as the parts sat unsupported horizontally in the box. I held the warped pieces up to a hot light bulb and allowed them to soften so I could remove the warp from them prior to assembly. For the most part this method worked and the walls were straight and true after I assembled them.

I chose a paint scheme for the structure before the glue came out. I went with dark green for the windows, a brick color for the bricks and a sandstone finish for all of the decorative stonework on the structure. The roof was painted weathered black and all of the spire tips on the tower were touched up in a gold leaf. I airbrushed all of the windows, doors, and downspouts while they were still on the parts sprue. After a paint change-out the same process was used on the brick walls. The sprues were then set aside and allowed to dry. My son Joel then used a pair of sprue nipping tweezers to free all of the parts from their sprues prior to assembly. In retrospect I probably should have left some of the parts on the sprues because of the sheer number of them. There were several times that it took me several minutes to find the "correct" part during construction.

I began the assembly process by gluing the clear window glazing to the backs of the windows and doors. Again these were set aside to dry and I turned my attention to the base sections of the kit. The base sections were glued together, taking the time to assure they fitted perfectly with one another. The external downspouts were glued to the front walls. I then added all of the windows to their respective walls and sat them aside to dry. While the base dried I added masking tape to the back/insides of some of the windows. The tape makes a good stand in for window blinds when viewed from outside. Applying the tape at different locations in a random fashion will create an interesting effect once the building is completed. Some offices will appear to have their blinds completely closed while some are open and some are in between. I have also been known to tear the tape to hint at damaged shades. The combinations are endless.

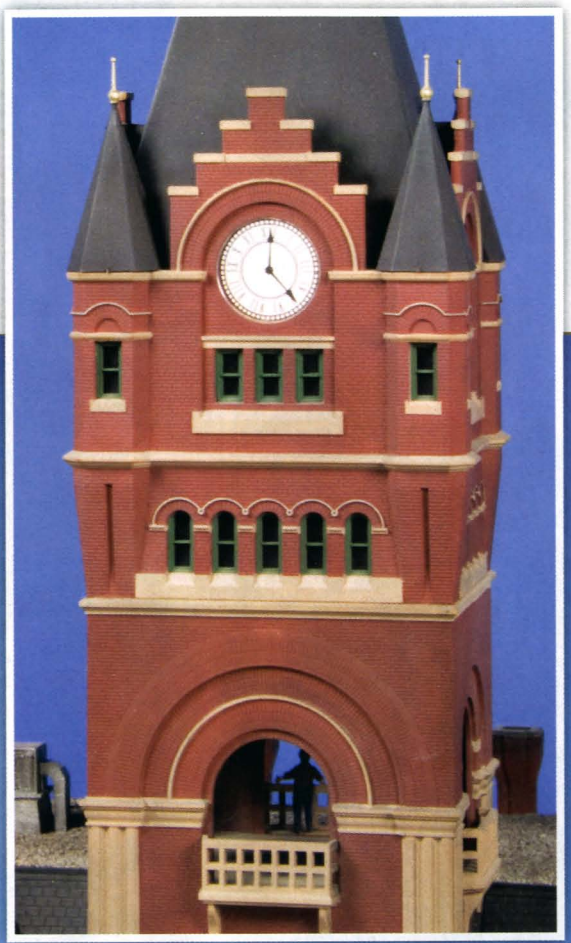
Next, the walls with their windows and blinds in place were glued together on the base to form a structure shell. Great care was taken to insure that all of the walls went together both square and plumb. The complex roof of this structure will not fit if the wall subas-

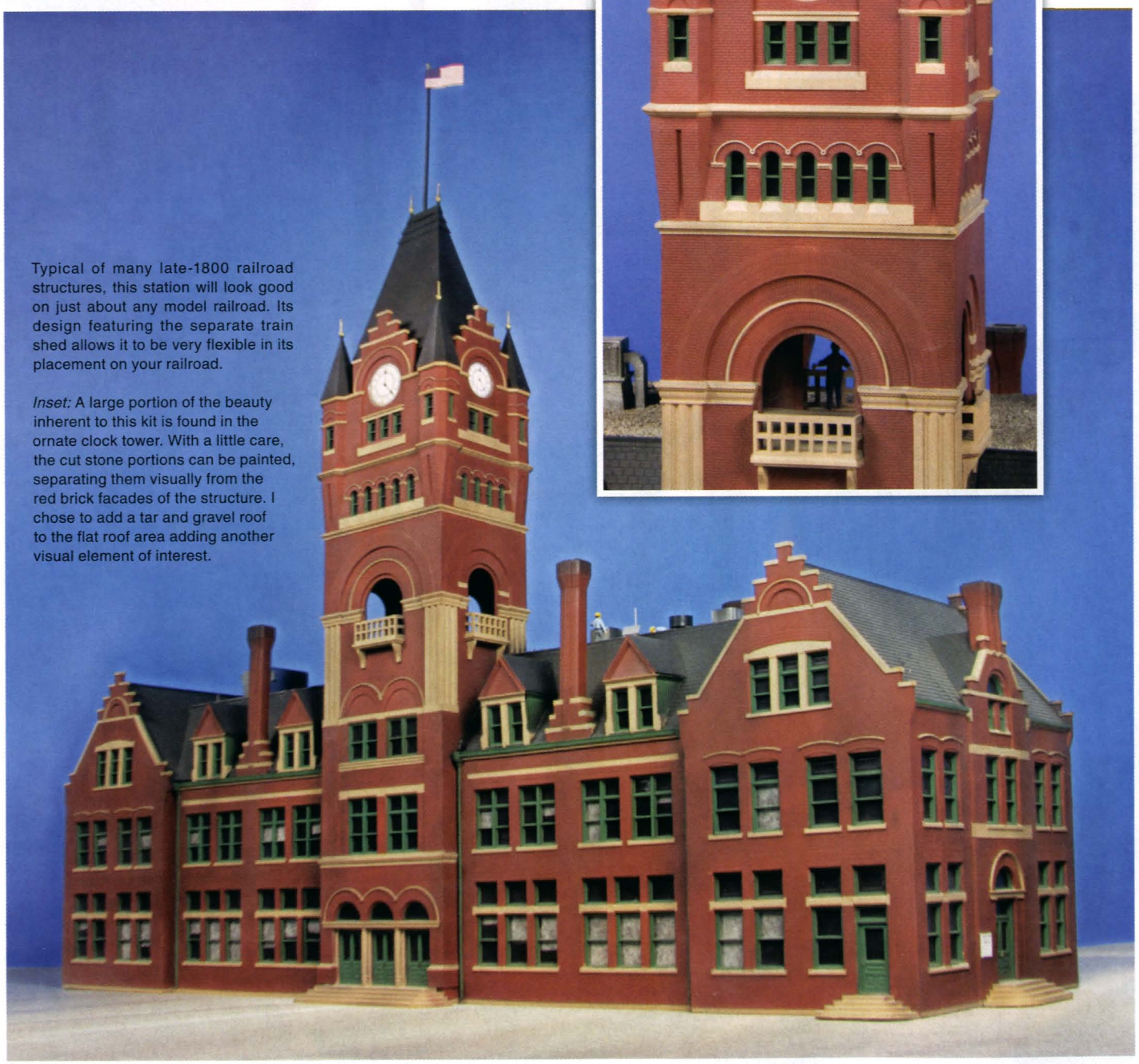
Opposite page: The train sheds are located below the elevated station building and its associated site. Passengers reach the trains via an underground tunnel system found in many depots. The tar and gravel roof can clearly be seen in this image. Also note that the station sits at the end of the main street providing a visual cap to the urban skyline.

AUSTIN CASE
SANTA FE
THE CHIEF

semblies are not fitted perfectly. The tower was also assembled at this point but separately as a subassembly. In this way I could control the fit of each part without having to manipulate the entire structure during the tower assembly. It is very important that the tower windows are installed prior to assembly because there are some very tight spots in the tower that do not lend themselves to post-assembly window insertion. I even airbrushed the backs of the tower windows lightly with Floquil engine black prior to assembly to kill the "see through" building look but leave a little opacity to the glass. I intentionally left off all of the small breakable parts from the tower. These include the flagpole, and the turret spires. These were added at the very end of construction prior to weathering. The tower was then added to the structure with care to ensure its correct fit. Because the tower is a "kit unto itself" I reinforced the points where it attaches to the rest of the structure. This way if the tower is bumped it will remain affixed to the rest of the structure.

After the tower had dried in place, the roof was assembled as per the kit instructions. It is very complex because of the multiple dormers, fireplace chimneys, the roof pitch and the central clock tower. I opted to paint the roof post-assembly because I wanted to make sure that I could fill in any roof gaps with filler putty if the need arose. I was also concerned about the three-piece flat roof section and its fit. As it turned out, I could have painted the roof with the airbrush prior to assembly because everything fit very well. I





Typical of many late-1800 railroad structures, this station will look good on just about any model railroad. Its design featuring the separate train shed allows it to be very flexible in its placement on your railroad.

Inset: A large portion of the beauty inherent to this kit is found in the ornate clock tower. With a little care, the cut stone portions can be painted, separating them visually from the red brick facades of the structure. I chose to add a tar and gravel roof to the flat roof area adding another visual element of interest.

did choose to add some additional internal bracing which keeps the flat roof flat and bolsters the rigidity of the entire roof system. After the Tenax 7R glue had dried I reinforced the roof joints with some thick gap-filling ACC so that the structure would not fall apart under its own weight. I probably overdid the reinforcing but I wanted a rigid structure. Arizona Rock and Mineral ballast was used to create a tar-and-gravel roof on the flat portion of the building. Additional details were added from my junk box to enhance the appearance of the roof. These included boards, barrels, tar buckets, pallets, figures, antennas, and roof-mounted air-conditioners.

Painting

As mentioned earlier, the walls and windows were painted prior to assembly. This pre-painting went a long way toward finishing the structure. After gluing the wall sections together, a little airbrush touch-up was done to hide the joints. I applied a light coat of the brick red anywhere the glue had removed or discolored the original coat of paint. One major paint feat still lurked at this point: the painting of all the "stone" window lintels, transoms, indentured columns, and thresholds. I spent three evenings masking these external details with blue painter's tape prior to painting them. This was by far the most challenging part of building this station.

However, it is the step that makes the structure stunning because all of the detail is there and the contrasting paint color really brings it out!

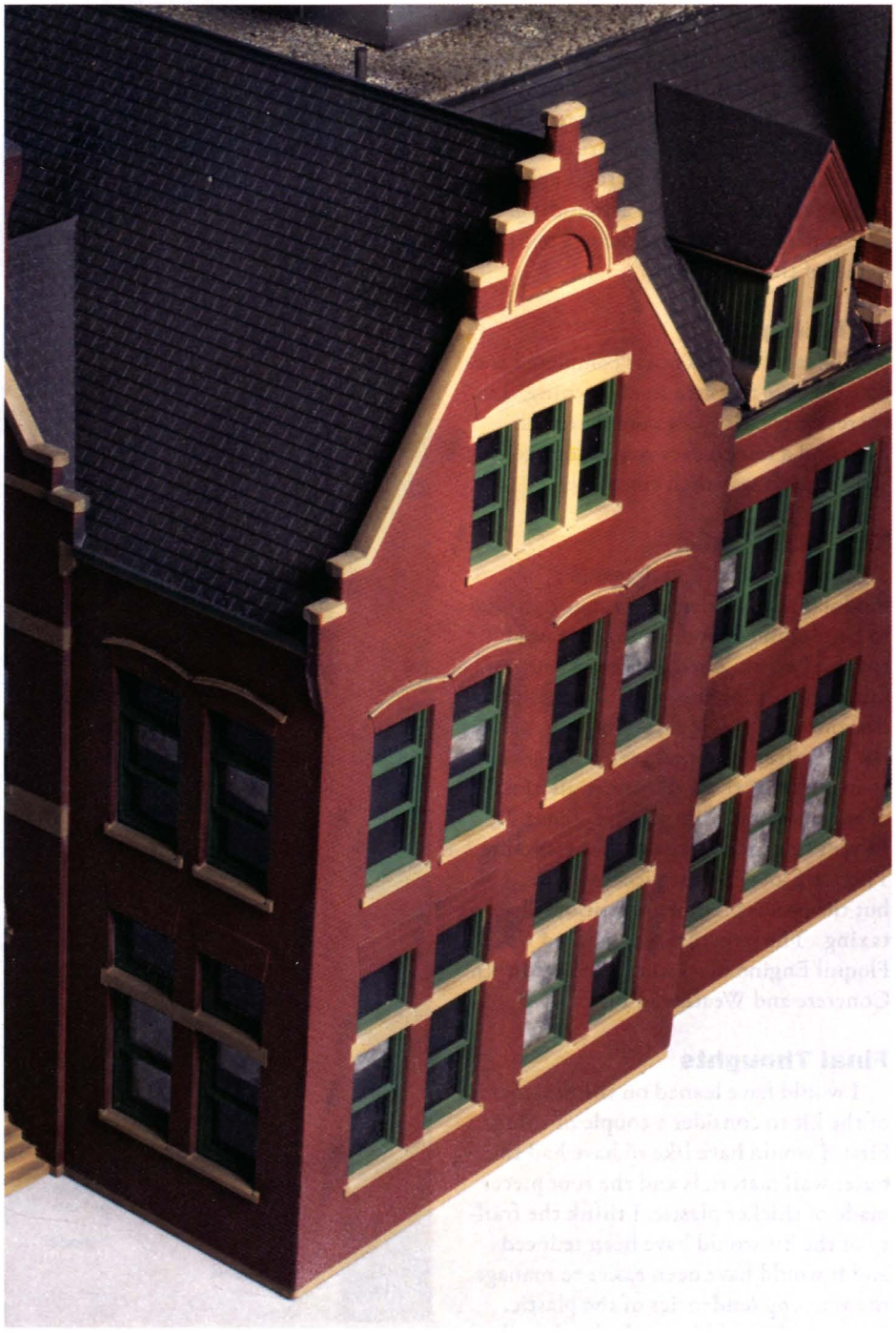
The credit for the final appearance of the building goes to the designers that took the time to provide all of the incredible stonework detail. I simply took my time and carefully fitted tape around each and every detail leaving only the surfaces that I wanted to paint as stone exposed. The tower was completed and painted on the first evening followed by one front and one sidewall on the next day. The final day saw the completion of the other end wall and the back wall. I cannot tell you how glad I was to be free from all of that masking and fitting. I also cannot tell you how thrilled I am at the results. Take a close look at the structure and you will quickly see how the stone detailing enhances the structure.

Some may choose to hand-paint the details, but I have found that masking takes just about the same time and the masking results are far more accurate. First, you have a much thinner coat of paint. Second, you have a much sharper paint separation line and your paint is generally more opaque. Masking is well worth the time. Set your mind to enjoy the work and you will. It really is fun.

The roof was airbrushed weathered black after masking off all of the brick chimneys and wall sections. This process was very time-consuming but worth the effort. Failure to do accurate masking will cheapen your structures appearance.

Prior to weathering I lightly paint the interior surfaces of the windows with Floquil Engine Black. This kills the majority of the "see-through" appearance of the structure. It also darkens the inside of the entire structure helping to overcome the non-opaqueness of the kit plastic.

The turret spires were painted a gold leaf color prior to being added to the structure.



Painting the window frames prior to inserting them into the wall sections saved valuable masking time. Unfortunately, the stonework must be masked and painted. The work is well worth it, as the structure is a visual icon on any railroad. Notice the light airbrush weathering.

Weathering

The entire structure was aged to create the appearance of a used but well-maintained structure. The primary weathering was applied using an airbrush. Floquil Concrete, Dust, and Weathered Black were used. The black was used to lightly coat the chimney areas hinting at years of soot build-up in those areas. Concrete was gently added to almost all of the structures surfaces creating a unifying coat of dust. Concrete was also used to streak the black roof areas alluding to the flow of water across the roof surfaces. Generally, when weathering structures the airbrush should be used in a vertical axis adding paint in a "flow of water" pattern. My goal was to lightly age the structure without overdoing it. The final appearance of the building was astounding. The concrete weathering brings out the detail of the structure.

Finishing Up

The last few tasks that completed the station were finished in an evening. The turret spires, flagpole complete with flag, and a few figures were added to the structure. It was then complete.

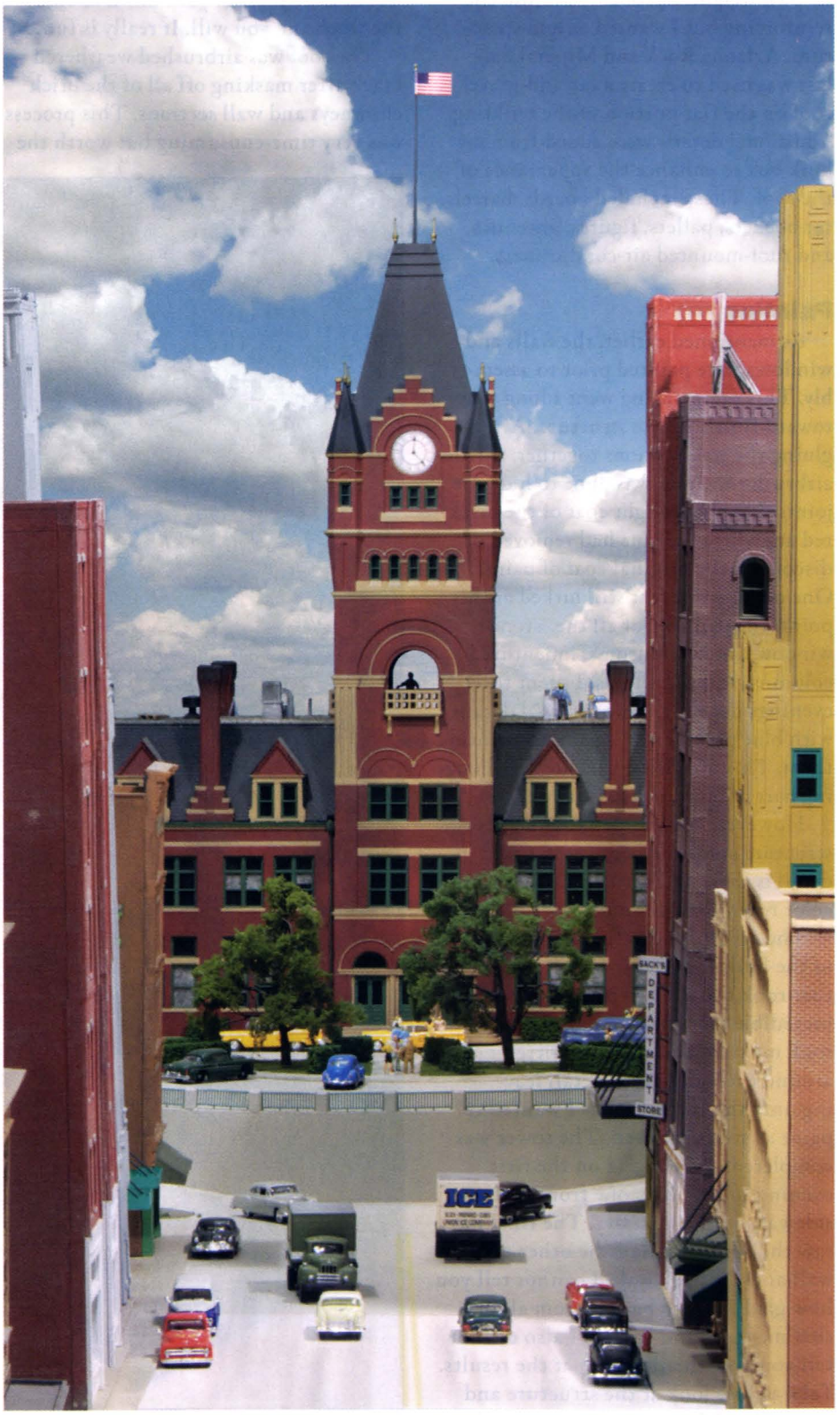
The Train Shed

The train shed is designed in a modular fashion that allows multiple kits to be combined. For my project I used two of the kits. Their construction was fairly straightforward and all pieces fit as designed. My son Joel carefully cut all of the parts from their respective sprues and then trimmed them to remove all hints of the injection points. I used Tenax 7R solvent cement to assemble the structure. There are lots of truss pieces to glue, but the process is more repetitious that taxing. The structure was painted with Floquil Engine Black and weathered with Concrete and Weathered Black.

Final Thoughts

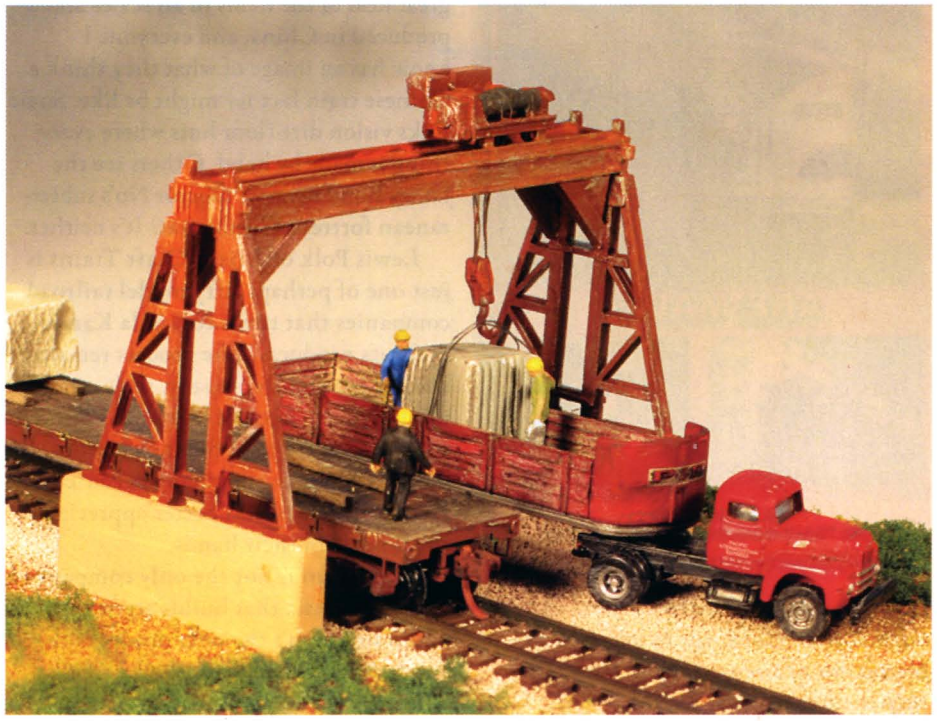
I would have leaned on the designer of the kit to consider a couple of things. First, I would have like to have had the outer wall materials and the roof pieces made of thicker plastic. I think the frailty of the kit would have been reduced and it would have been easier to manage the warping tendencies of the plastic. Secondly, I would have liked to have had a one-piece flat roof section. The kit has a three-piece roof that was a little challenging to assemble, especially because so many other pieces depend on the flat roof for their placement and tight fit.

Although this model is of a particular prototype structure, it lends itself to many large American cities and could be used by many railroads as their passenger terminal. Overall I am more than thrilled with this kit and its finished appearance. There is just nothing else like it! I would like to thank my friends at Walthers for their research, design, and implementation of this structure!



The elevated placement of the station was designed into the overall layout of the city. One of the main streets ends at the concrete retaining wall for the station parking. Two curved ramps then allow automotive traffic access to the structure. The tall clock-tower and imposing roofline provides a fitting cap to the scene.

New Overhead gantry crane helps lift heavy loads



Railroad workers oversee the moving operation of a large pre-cast concrete part.

N — Monroe Models has announced the release of their newest kit, and overhead gantry crane.

Every railroad needs an overhead crane to lift heavy objects from railcars to trucks for delivery to its final destination. The cranes are used for lifting quarry stones, pre-cast concrete parts, steel coils, steel rails, large crates, or anything that wouldn't roll off a flat car or gondola. This gantry crane model is created from an actual prototype erected in the 1930s that still stands to this day.

The kit features six white metal (lead free) parts and two cast resin parts for the concrete foundation, as well as complete assembly instructions and cable for the hook. The modeler will need a small file, super glue, and modeling paints for assembly and finishing of the kit. The scenery, figures, vehicles, and trees are not included. The crane is 2-3/4 inches long by 1-1/2 inches wide, and is 2-1/4 inches high. The overhead gantry crane (#9301) retails for $12.99.

Monroe Models, P.O. Box 1120, Cokato, MN 55321; 320-286-2854; E-mail: monroemodels@cmgate.com; www.monroemodels.us

McPherson's Tooling and Machining Co.

McPherson's Machining Co. is a triangular-shaped building. Shown is the kit with a Southern Railway Sign, however, other road's heralds are also available.

O — Twin Whistle Sign & Kit Co. has announced their merge with TW Laser Designs. The company states that the merger will allow them to produce laser-cut kits, accessories, billboards, and signs that will set new standards for them in detail and design. They also state that they will be engraving in wood, glass, metal, and certain plastics.

Their first product is the McPherson's Tooling and Machining Co. The kit is laser-cut alder and basswood. The building is triangular in shape and measures 7 inches long by 4 inches wide by 5.25 inches high. The kit includes resin roof castings, building signs, laser-cut windows, a separate loading dock, barrels, crates, a ladder, and a top sign for the building that is also laser cut. Also included is a tips and tricks booklet to assist in creating a realistic model. The kit retails for $54.95.

Twin Whistle Sign & Kit Co., 31 Turnberry Dr., Arden, NC 28704; 828-684-6785; Fax: 828-651-0365; E-mail: twinwhistle@hotmail.com; www.twinwhistle.com

Kanamodel builds up lumber camps for local lumber jacks

N — Kanamodel has released a set of three company houses. The prototypes for this kit were built by Canada Western Lumber Company and they stood well into the 1960s. Each model can be built in different configurations. The kit includes lasercut walls, cast windows and doors, color coded Mt. Albert stripwood, and instructions. The kit is also available as a single structure. The suggested retail prices are $37.95 for a set of three, and $12.95 for a single.

Kanamodel Products Inc., PO Box 57585-1031, Coquitlam, BC V3K 6S8; 604-522-6491; E-mail: info@kanamodel.com; www.kanamodel.com

REVIEW DVD

Aristo's "How Model Trains Are Made" tells fascinating story

Review and Photos by John Sipple

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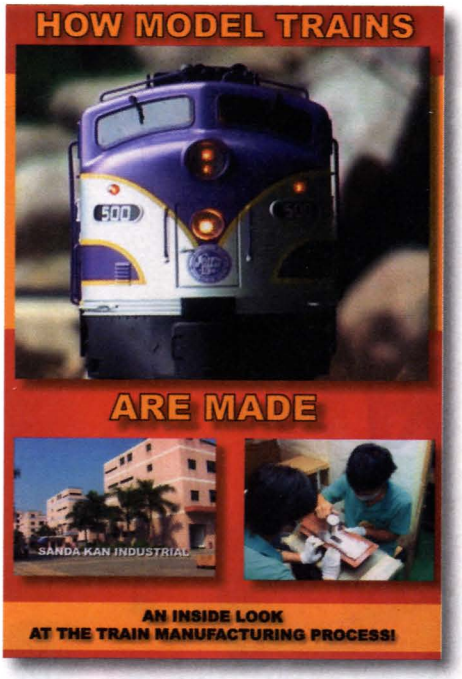

WHAT do you see in your mind when you ponder how model railroad trains are made? A great deal of the items in all scales are produced in China, and everyone I know has an image of what they think a Chinese train factory might be like. Some folks vision dirt-floor huts where everything is made by hand. Others see the James Bond nemesis Doctor No's subterranean fortress. Guess what? It's neither.

Lewis Polk of Aristo-Craft Trains is just one of perhaps fifty model railroad companies that turns to Sanda Kan to make its products. The process remains similar from one company, scale, and project to the next. Mr. Polk has often sought to share what he knows about model train manufacturing because he feels modelers would better appreciate the models in their hands.

Sanda Kan is not the only company in Eastern Asia that builds train models, and trains aren't the only products that Sanda Kan makes. Still, Sanda Kan is currently the largest builder of model trains in the world and has specialized abilities for that market. Located not far from Hong Kong, it is a fifteen hour flight from America's East Coast and about an hour by hydrofoil up the coast to Shenzhen, the city where the factory is located.

What the video reveals is a modern facility with a computerized engineering section, spotless manufacturing spaces, specialized machinery, and even clean rooms. Products are designed, constructed, tested, inspected, packaged, and loaded into containers that will take the journey to Irvington, New Jersey where they will be shipped to dealers all over world.

The video starts with the planning meeting for a specific product, and these decisions are made in Aristo's Irvington facility before Lewis takes the plans and other information halfway around the world. From here, we see how the com-

Atlas Reacts to Kader Purchase of Sanda Kan — Press Release

As news of the pending acquisition of Sanda Kan by Kader Holdings Company Limited, both of China, spreads through the model railroad industry, officials of the Atlas Model Railroad Co., Inc, and Atlas O, LLC want to assure its distributors, dealers, and consumers that it is supportive of the action and anticipates no disruptions as the new arrangement is finalized. Sanda Kan, (SDK), the major supplier of Atlas products in HO, N, and O scales, has produced Atlas products for over 15 years.

"We are pleased to learn that Kader Holdings Company Limited will take over operations at Sanda Kan, and look forward to working with Kader Holdings to ensure continuation of the successful relationship we have enjoyed with Sanda Kan for so many years," said Thomas W. Haedrich, Atlas CEO. "There have been no significant delays in production and delivery currently, nor are any anticipated due to the pending acquisition."

Officials involved stated that the acquisition is viewed as more of a "partnership" than a merger. Currently, intentions are to maintain present management at SDK intact as much as possible, and SDK will continue to operate as a separate entity from Kader. A formal announcement of the acquisition will be made by the Kader Holdings Company Limited when the deal is finalized.

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puter design process results in the steel molds being cut. Parts are then made with injection molding machines and a large amount of careful handwork finishes each part as the result of a horde of ladies with dark pony-tails, scrub masks, and rubber-gloved hands.

Sanda Kan is not one factory; it's many of them, and each product winds its way through an array of subassemblies until it is time to make the final assembly and finish the product. I was fascinated by the process and appreciated that this is how much of our hobby is supplied. I've seen factories in Germany and the US, and they all have a similar workflow to Sanda Kan. All that is different is the size of each facility and its location.

The Video

I found the video project was very well done. The main stars of the film are Lewis and his son, Scott. Jonathan, another of Lewis' sons, is behind the camera. I've found that many factories won't let you shoot videos or stills in just any location, usually due to trade secrets, so what we see is what an invited visitor might see.

The editing is vigorous, pacing us well through the many places and processes that can be shown. Lewis and his sons are gentlemen, relaxed and offering a forebearing humor. As such, they make ideal hosts. Under the surface, however, is an immense financial gamble on every product made. In their pleasant way, they have to hedge their bets with quality, insight, and market savvy.

But every model train supplier is in the same place. As this video states early, it's all about "Return On Investment." As much as there is a tendency of model railroaders to count the rivets, the crafters of our industry have to count the dollars. This can sometimes put the modeler at cross purposes to the train maker. One group plays with trains while the other plays with bankers. Put another way: No profit, no trains.

The video doesn't say that, nor does it even imply it, but for a very modest price, you can get 35 minutes of reality. Yes, this video is enjoyable and certainly fascinating, but when Sanda Kan was placed up for sale, our industry leaders held their breath. You may now purchase your own copy so you can better appreciate why they are exhaling with relief.

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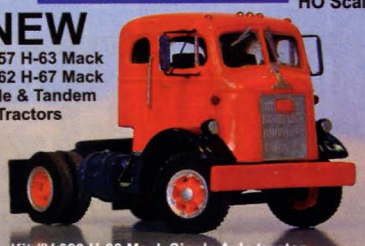

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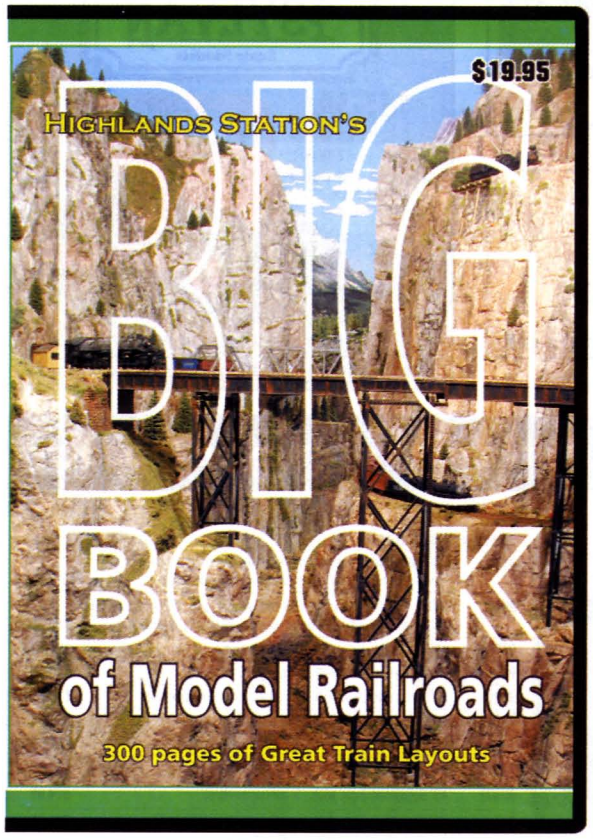
New DVD from Highlands Station



DVD — Highlands Station has released its ninth digital book, *Big Book of Model Railroads*, which features the layouts of well-known modelers like George Sellios and Howard Zane along with lesser-known but highly skilled modelers who model in scales ranging from Z to G.

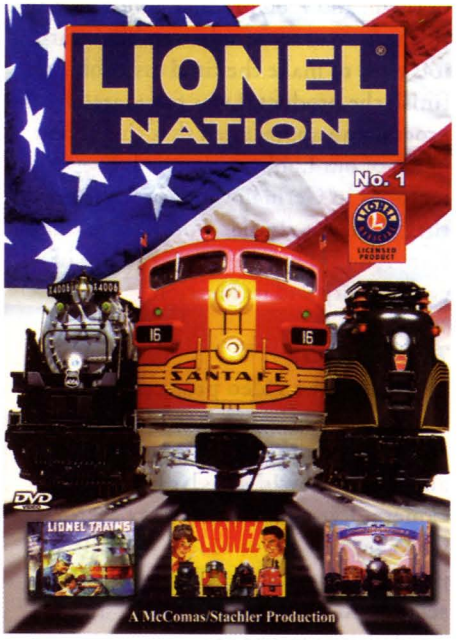
The digital book displays private, and even a few club layouts, of all sizes and scopes that will inspire and inform you on the techniques and vision of their creators. Taken from the pages of *Model Railroading* magazine and presented in PDF format (Adobe Reader 5.0 or later required), all text is fully searchable, and all of the high-resolution photos can be zoomed in on for close examination of the details. With 3.3 GB of information, this DVD requires a computer with a DVD drive, it is not a video disk that can be played on a DVD player for viewing on your TV.

Because the images are 300 dpi rather than the more common 96 dpi, readers can get an extremely close look at fine details. Pages may be printed for personal use. With 300 pages, 39 layouts, and hundreds of high-resolution photos, the DVD retails for $19.95 each.

Highlands Station, Inc., 4255 S. Buckley R. #137, Aurora, CO 80013-2951; 303-829-4449; Fax: 720-870-8279; E-mail: Randy@HighlandsStationLLC.com; www.HighlandsStationLLC.com

New Lionel Nations DVD

DVD — TM Books and Video has released the first DVD for a new series, Lionel Nation, No. 1.



Part 1 features three layouts — the Standard Gauge layouts, and collections of Chuck Brasher and Tom Sefton, and the Modern Era, Clarke Dunham-designed layout of Dr. Michael Theodorakis. The DVD covers 75 years of Lionel sounds, from the "Chugger" in the 1933 to the latest in Railsounds.

The DVD includes the comparison of the original toy versions of the *Hiawatha*, GGI, and Santa Fe with Lionel's new showroom in Manhattan and the Christmas layouts at Macy's, FAO Schwartz, and Grand Central Terminal. Plus the music of James Coffey and a lot of Prewar, Postwar, and Modern Era train action.

The Lionel Nation, No. 1 (ISBN-13 978-0-937522-48-6) is 65 minutes, and retails for $19.95.

TM Books and Video, P.O. Box 279, New Buffalo, MI 49117-0279; 219-879-2822; Fax: 219-879-7909; E-mail: clm@tmbv.com; www.tmbv.com

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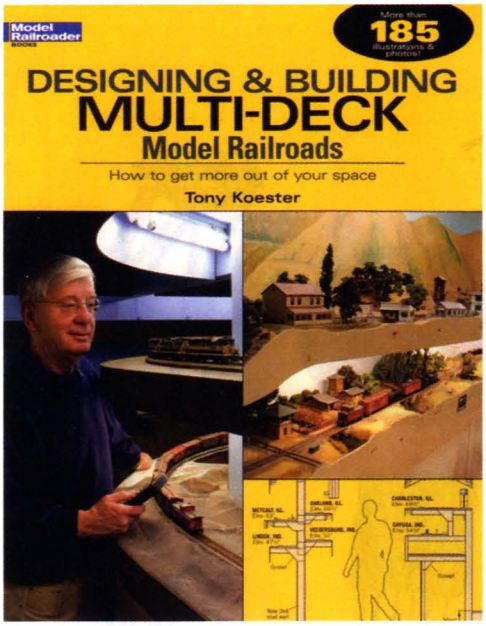
Designing & Building Multi-Deck Model Railroads



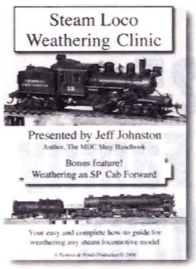
BOOK — Kalmbach Publishing Co. has released Designing & Building Multi-Deck Model Railroads by Tony Koester. The book demonstrates how to acquire more space for scenery and longer mainline runs. The writer walks readers through design options, lighting, wiring considerations, and the construction process and techniques of building a model railroad with multiple decks.

Designing & Building Multi-Deck Model Railroads (ISBN 978-0-89024-741-9) retails for $19.95.

Kalmbach Publishing Co., P.O. Box 1612, Waukesha, WI 53187-1612; 800-533-6644; Fax: 262-798-6592; www.kalmbach.com

Steam Loco Weathering Clinic DVD

84 minutes, NTSC only $20.00 + $3.00 S/H
($6.00 international)



It's fun and there's no engine disassembly required to weather a steam engine model! The video covers the step-by-step jobs on a Bachmann Climax and a BLI AC-4 Cab Forward. You'll learn about weathering chalk, paint washes and airbrush techniques, paint blending, wheel cleaning and the tools and tips that make weathering a fun and easy part of the hobby.

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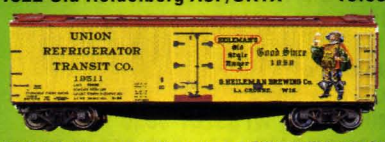

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REVIEW DCC

New DZ125 Decoder Family from Digitrax

Review and Photos by Phil Scandura

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The new DZ125 decoder family from Digitrax can be installed in Z, N, and some HO-scale locomotives. Three versions of the DZ125 are available offering identical functionality, with a difference only in packaging. Seen here are the DZ125 (left), DZ125IN (middle), and DZ125PS (right). These are the smallest decoders offered by Digitrax, yet they come fully equipped with great features (except for the dime: you'll have to provide your own).

NEVER one to stand still, Digitrax continues to grow their line of locomotive decoders. Recently introduced, the DZ125 decoder family can be installed in Z-, N-, and some HO-scale locomotives. Three versions of the DZ125 are available offering identical functionality, with a difference only in packaging.

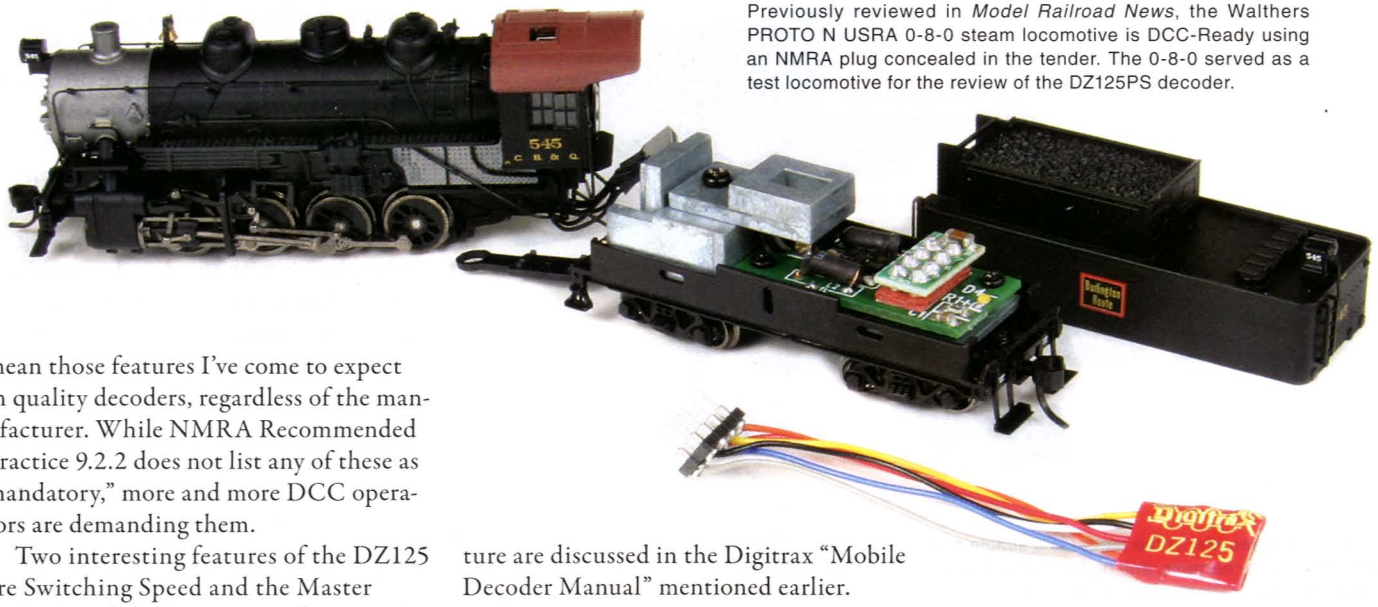
The DZ125 traces its lineage back to the original DZ120 decoder, introduced by Digitrax nearly 10 years ago. A wonder of micro-engineering, at the time it claimed to be the "world's smallest 1 Amp decoder." While I can't confirm or deny the accuracy of the claim, I do know the DZ120 was a welcome addition to the Digitrax decoder family. I had several installed in my early locomotive fleet when other decoders would not fit. If it weren't for the DZ120, my introduction to DCC would have been delayed for some time. Since the introduction of the DZ120, it has been succeeded by the DZ121, DZ123, and now the DZ125. Along the way, innovative features such as User Scalable Speed Stabilization (Back EMF), configurable lighting, and integrated transponding were added.

A Closer Look

The supported features and Configuration Variables (CV) are identical for the DZ125, DZ125IN, and DZ125PS. Due to limited printing space in the decoder packaging, the instructions provided with each decoder don't always list all of the available CVs supported. For a complete list of supported CVs, functions, and their associated instructions you'll want to download the "Mobile Decoder Manual" from the Manuals and Instructions section of the Digitrax web site. In addition, be sure to visit the Digitrax Knowledge Base in the technical support section of their web site. There you can find feature descriptions that haven't been added to the manuals yet (for example, the decoder lock feature supported by the DZ125 family).

Special decoder features of the DZ125 include: torque compensation; scaleable speed stabilization (Back EMF); supersonic motor drive; switching speed; Digitrax's FX3 prototypical lighting effects including ditch lights, Mars light, strobes, rotary beacon, Gyralite, and Rule 17 dimming; function remapping and function qualifiers; master light switch; transponder ID equipped suitable for use with digital surround sound systems; and motor isolation protection to prevent decoder damage if the motor is not properly isolated.

Supported "standard" features include: 14/28/28 speed step operation; three step speed tables (Vstart, Vmid, Vmax); 28-step speed curves; momentum control of acceleration and deceleration; 2-digit and 4-digit addressing; basic, advanced, and universal consisting; decoder reset; constant brightness and directional lighting; user-selectable direction of travel; and the ability to program the decoder in all standard programming modes plus OPS mode (mainline programming). By "standard" I



Previously reviewed in *Model Railroad News*, the Walthers PROTO N USRA 0-8-0 steam locomotive is DCC-Ready using an NMRA plug concealed in the tender. The 0-8-0 served as a test locomotive for the review of the DZ125PS decoder.

mean those features I've come to expect in quality decoders, regardless of the manufacturer. While NMRA Recommended Practice 9.2.2 does not list any of these as "mandatory," more and more DCC operators are demanding them.

Two interesting features of the DZ125 are Switching Speed and the Master Light Switch. When activated using CV54, Switching Speed effectively cuts the throttle setting in half and reduces the effects of acceleration and deceleration by 25 percent. By pushing the function F6 key on the throttle this feature permits you to easily change between road speed and yard speed for switching operations.

The Master Light Switch permits you to turn on and off all lights and functions with one keystroke, if you so desire. Each of the function outputs can be selectively assigned to the function F0 key on the throttle giving the user the ability to turn them on and off simultaneously. Complete details for configuring this feature are discussed in the Digitrax "Mobile Decoder Manual" mentioned earlier.

Digitrax gives a one-year warranty on all products including decoders. The warranty covers manufacturing defects, but does not cover decoder damage due to applying excessive input voltage, failure to protect against decoder over-current by properly isolating the locomotive motor from the frame, and other installation errors. Digitrax recommends testing the decoder prior to installation using the testing process described in the Digitrax "Mobile Decoder Manual." Non-warranty decoder repairs cost $17 for continental U.S. addresses or $23 for addresses outside of the continental U.S. (the repair cost covers return shipping to you).

Decoder Installation

As noted previously, the DZ125 decoder family supports Z-, N-, and HO-scale locomotives, so long as the locomotive doesn't exceed the current handling capacity of the decoder. The DZ125 provides two function outputs rated at 500 milliamps each, typically used for front and rear headlights. The continuous output current to the motor is rated at 1 Amp. The peak current capacity and maximum allowable track voltage were items of confusion, however. Discrepancies were noted between the instructions packaged with the decoders and the descriptive information provid-

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Installing the decoder in the tender is a simple matter of removing the factory shorting plug, replacing it with the decoder harness, and replacing the tender shell. A process taking typically less than five minutes; however, complications soon developed.

ed on the web site. Peak current capacity was listed as both 1.25 Amps and 2 Amps, while the maximum track voltage was listed as both 18 volts and 20 volts. Digitrax technical support advised the correct values are 1.25 Amps peak and 20 volts maximum input. The web site and decoder packaging will be updated in a future revision.

The DZ125 decoder offers full decoder functionality, using the basic hard-wired installation approach. The DZ125IN decoder is equipped with a 6-pin NEM 651 plug, typically used in locomotives produced by United Kingdom and European manufacturers. The DZ125PS decoder is equipped with an 8-pin NMRA plug via a 1-inch long wiring harness. The approximate size of the decoder, not including the wires or plugs, is 0.418 x 0.340 x 0.112 inches (10.6 x 8.7 x 2.86 millimeters).

Installing the DZ125 requires finding room within the target locomotive. For diesels, this may require removing a portion of the frame to make room. In N scale there are companies that offer replacement frames that already have a space milled out for the decoder, as well as those that offer after-market frames with space reserved for the decoder. For steam locomotives, you may be able to install the decoder in the tender if the necessary wiring is available. Consult the "Digitrax Decoder Installation Application Notes" available on the Manuals and Instructions section of the Digitrax web site for a listing of various decoder installations.

Installing the DZ125IN assumes you have a locomotive already equipped with a NEM 651 plug. In this case all you need to do is remove the factory shorting plug and replace it with the decoder. While I didn't have any locomotives of this type available, the decoder instruction sheet covers the installation of the DZ125IN in many different N-scale locomotives, including the Kato N-EMD class 66, Bachmann Farish Jubilee, the Dapol Hymek, and the Trix v160 N. Photos of each installation are provided with the Digitrax instructions.

Installing the DZ125PS assumes your locomotive is equipped with an 8-pin NMRA plug. Here again all you need to do is remove the factory shorting plug and replace it with the decoder, making sure to align Pin 1 (the orange wire on the decoder harness) with Pin 1 on the locomotive socket. Perhaps you'll recall the review of the Walthers PROTO N USRA 0-8-0 steam locomotive in the March 2008 issue of *Model Railroad News*. The 0-8-0 is DCC-Ready using an NMRA plug concealed in the tender. At that time I did not have a decoder that would fit in the tender. With the release of the DZ125PS I had high hopes of a quick conversion. Unfortunately it was not meant to be. As seen in the photos, Walthers did not provide enough clearance to accommodate a standard DCC plug, such as the one used by Digitrax. While the decoder functioned perfectly, it was not possible to put the tender shell back on the tender. The Walthers 0-8-0 includes a note anticipating this, suggesting that the user cut off the DCC plug and directly solder the wires to the DCC socket. Frankly this defeats the entire point of the socket!

Decoder Performance Testing

Since all three decoders are identical in functionality, testing the DZ125PS should provide a clear picture of the capabilities of the DZ125IN and DZ125 as well. First I ran the 0-8-0 on a loop of test track, using three different DCC systems: the Digitrax Zephyr, Lenz Set-100, and MRC Prodigy Advance2. I experienced no operating differ-

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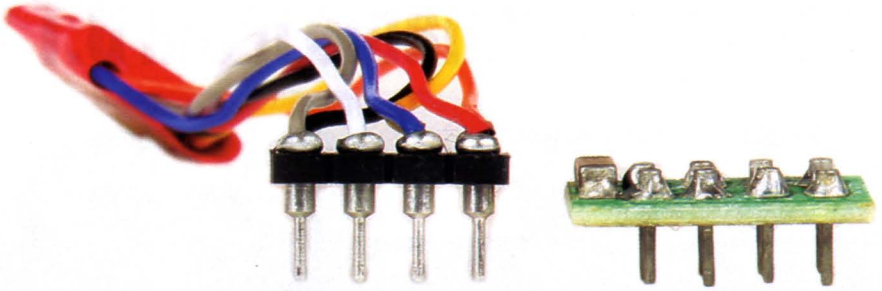

Because of a height mismatch between DZ125PS plug (left) and Walthers plug (right), the tender shell would not clear the wires on the top of the plug, preventing the shell from fitting properly. Digitrax uses an industry-standard plug, while the Walthers plug is a small circuit board with pins soldered through it. The difference in plug design and lack of clearance created the problem. Walthers should investigate a new layout of the tender circuit board, one that relocates the socket to a location with more clearance (perhaps under the coal load). Although the clearance problem scuttled any thoughts of a quick DCC conversion, decoder performance testing was successfully performed by operating the locomotive without the tender shell.

ences between the three systems and the DZ125PS. Next I performed CV programming, both on the programming track and on the mainline using OPS programming. The DZ125PS programmed successfully using all three systems. Finally, I ran the 0-8-0 through various switching scenarios on our club layout, which is equipped with a Digitrax Chief, to see how easy it would be to use the Switching Speed feature. While very easy to use by simply pressing F6, the locomotive abruptly changed between road speed and yard speed instead of gradually slowing down. Perhaps Digitrax didn't intend for users to press F6 while the train was in motion.

Closing Thoughts

The new DZ125 decoder family from Digitrax is another winner. It is feature-rich, providing many of the basic and advanced operating features expected by DCC operators. Add to that installation flexibility offered by three different packaging styles and the result is a decoder versatile enough for almost any locomotive installation.

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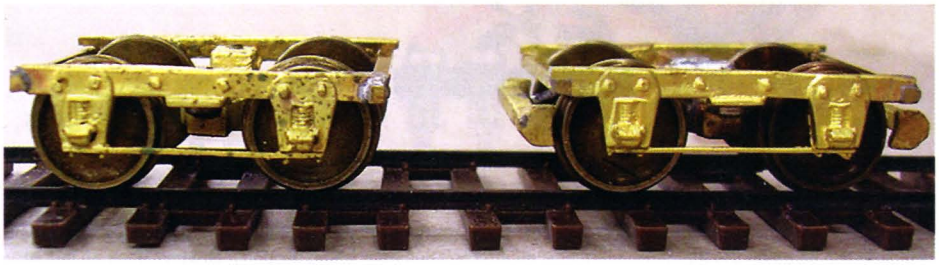
New civil war era trucks available from B.T.S

HO — B.T.S has released new brass truck kits. They feature NWSL blackened code 88 wheelsets, with special-order 2-millimeter diameter axles to represent the lighter axles of the early days. Additional brass has been put into the bolster to provide some weight at a lower center of gravity. Soldering is recommended for the assembly, but epoxy or ACC will also work.

As per the prototype, the woodbeam trucks feature brake beams on only one truck; that is the truck at the brake wheel end of the car.



BTS has released a new civil war-era truck in HO scale. Model shown without bolster springs.

The trucks with bolster springs (#22907) retail for $22.95, without bolster springs (#22910) retail for $21.95, and the Archbar trucks (#22913) measuring 4-foot 6-inches with bolster springs, retail for $18.95.

BTS, RR 1 Box 141A, Belington, WV 26250; 304-823-3729; Fax: 304-823-2901; E-mail: bill@btsrr.com; www.btsrr.com

New Buckeye A.R.A trucks from Tahoe Model Works

HO — Tahoe Model Works has released new Buckeye A.R.A 50 ton trucks. The trucks were manufactured by the Buckeye Steel Castings Company from the late 1920s until the late 1940s. Conventional trucks, such as this one, complied with American Railway Association standards. Prototype features include a spring plank spanning across both side frames and, in each side frame, four coil springs grouped close together.

The trucks feature one-piece black acetal plastic moldings with separate brake shoe detail, and non-magnetic, insulated metal RP-25 contour wheelsets. Trucks are also available with "semi-scale" (.088-inches wide) wheels.

The trucks are available with regular wheelsets (#TMW-106), and with "semi-scale" wheelsets (#TMW-206), and retail for $6.25 a pair.

Tahoe Model Works, 5801 Sheep Dr. # 7, Carson City, NV 89701-1420; 775-882-8813; E-mail: b.leppert@att.net

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REVIEW DCC

Lenz Set-100 DCC Starter Set Gets an Upgrade

Review and Photos by Phil Scandura

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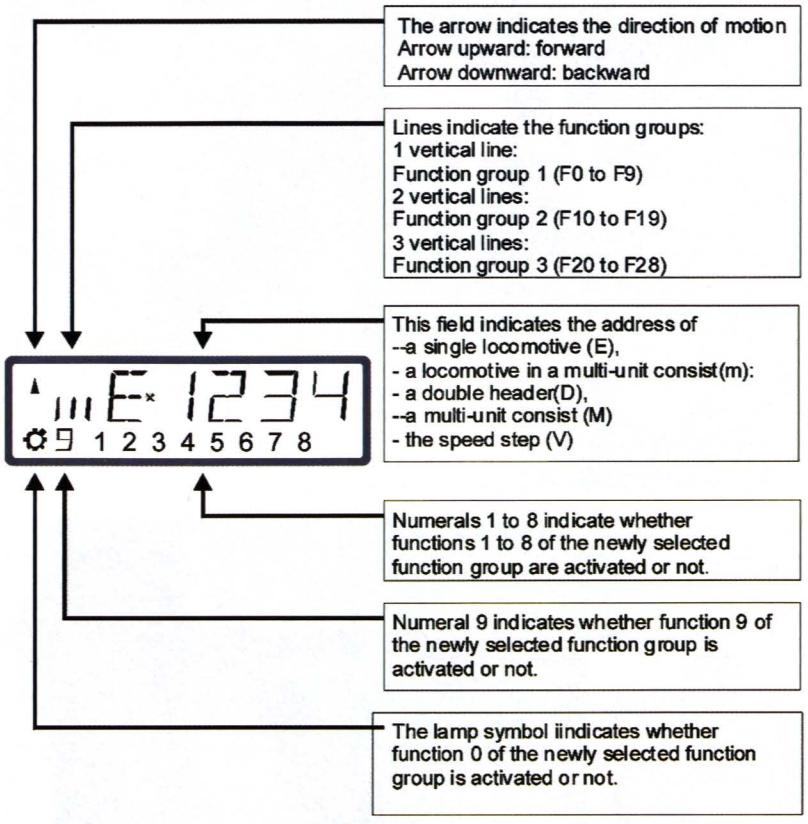
A PIONEER in the field of Digital Command Control (DCC), Lenz recently announced an upgrade to its venerable Set-100. Consisting of the LZV100 command/power station and LH100 keypad-based dispatcher's throttle, notable features include a full-featured read-write decoder programmer, the ability to control up to 256 locomotives, support for 31 throttles, locomotive consisting mode, turnout control (via accessory decoders), and user prompts in English and German. For those that have been following *Model Railroad News'* Project DCC series, the Lenz Set-100 is one of the three DCC systems being used. Discussed in Part 3 of the series (August 2008), the Lenz system has been a solid performer throughout the construction and testing of the layout. Now that an update has been released, *MRN* was given the chance to try out the new features.

The current Set-100 versions used by Project DCC are V3.5 for the LZV100 and V3.0 for the LH100 (version information is printed on the user manuals

The LH100 LCD Display

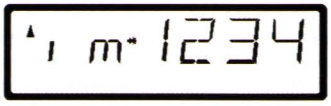
The LH has a two rows of operation LCD display.


The arrow indicates the direction of motion
Arrow upward: forward
Arrow downward: backward
Lines indicate the function groups:
1 vertical line:
Function group 1 (F0 to F9)
2 vertical lines:
Function group 2 (F10 to F19)
3 vertical lines:
Function group 3 (F20 to F28)
This field indicates the address of
--a single locomotive (E),
- a locomotive in a multi-unit consist(m):
- a double header(D),
--a multi-unit consist (M)
- the speed step (V)
1234
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
Numerals 1 to 8 indicate whether functions 1 to 8 of the newly selected function group are activated or not.
Numeral 9 indicates whether function 9 of the newly selected function group is activated or not.
The lamp symbol iindicates whether function 0 of the newly selected function group is activated or not.

Depending on which mode of operation you are using, the display will look different. The display for the locomotive address always uses 4 digits. Zeros are added in front of the address if needed.

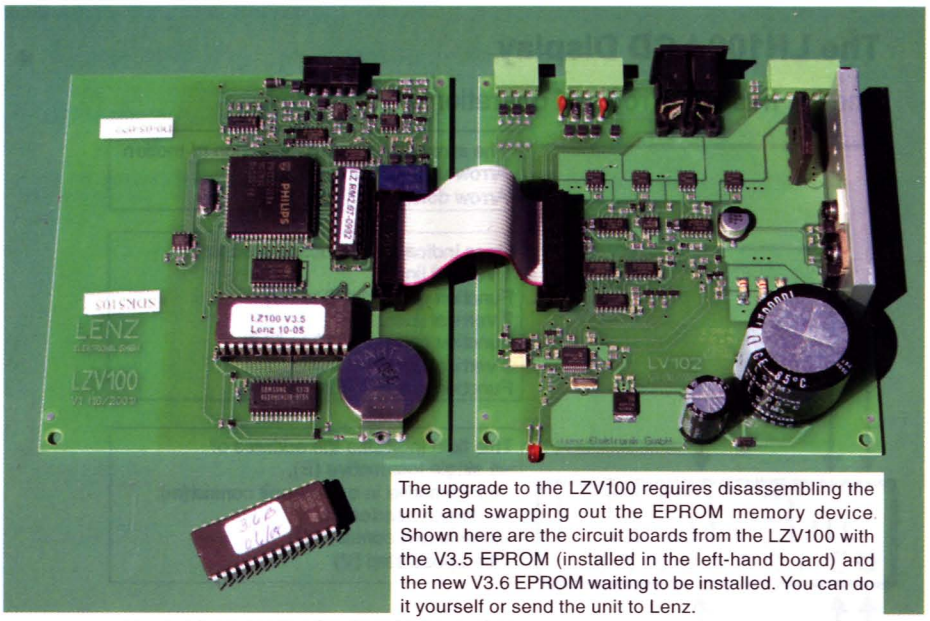
Here are examples of the most important displays:

A single locomotive with address 0003 is being controlled.

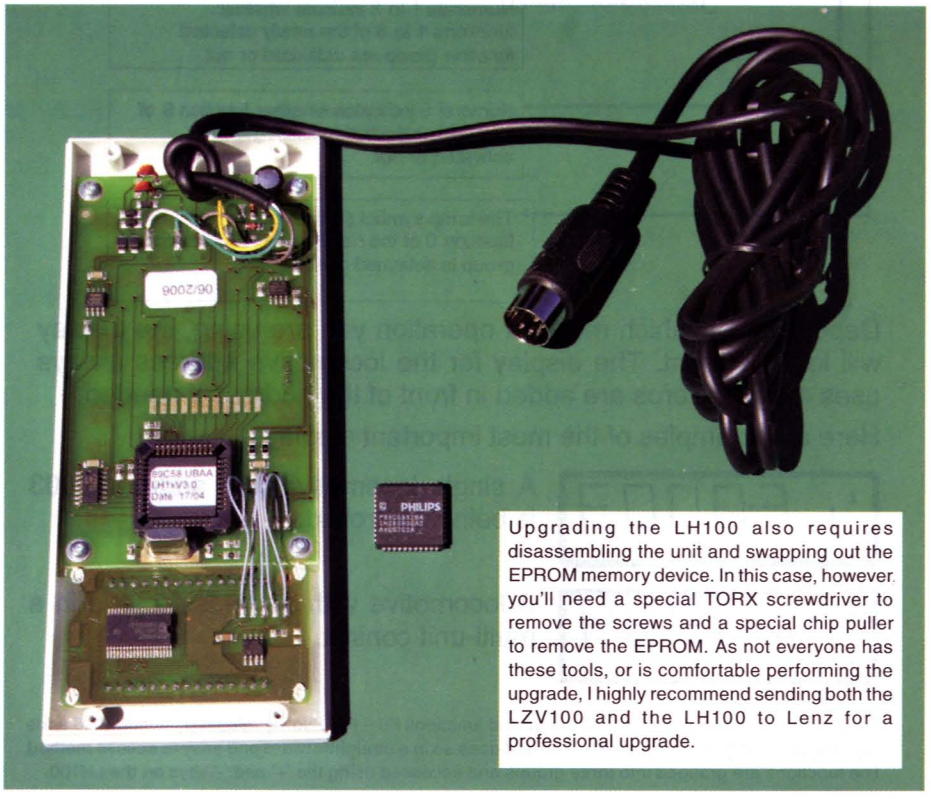


A locomotive with address 1234 is in a multi-unit consist.

The previous version of the Set-100 supported functions F0 – F12. Newly released version V3.6 adds support for all NMRA functions F0 – F28 and does so in a straightforward and easy to access method. The functions are grouped into three groups and accessed using the '+' and '-' keys on the LH100.



The upgrade to the LZV100 requires disassembling the unit and swapping out the EPROM memory device. Shown here are the circuit boards from the LZV100 with the V3.5 EPROM (installed in the left-hand board) and the new V3.6 EPROM waiting to be installed. You can do it yourself or send the unit to Lenz.



Upgrading the LH100 also requires disassembling the unit and swapping out the EPROM memory device. In this case, however, you'll need a special TORX screwdriver to remove the screws and a special chip puller to remove the EPROM. As not everyone has these tools, or is comfortable performing the upgrade, I highly recommend sending both the LZV100 and the LH100 to Lenz for a professional upgrade.

and can also be queried from the system). The new release introduced in June 2008 updated both the LZV100 and LH100 to version V3.6.

The new features, paraphrased from the Lenz press release, include:

Full support for all 29 NMRA functions (F0 – F28), which can be configured per locomotive to be latching or momentary. In addition, selected function information can be refreshed by the command station between operating sessions.

Ability to quickly change between locomotive addresses using the LH100 'Esc' key. The size of the locomotive "stack" can be configured between 1 and 12 entries.

Ability to read CVs on the main line from Lenz Gold decoders and others that support NMRA bi-directional protocol. This feature requires a RailCom equipped decoder and a RailCom detector (such as the LRC120).

Speed access to read/write a sequence of CVs or to increment/decrement values using the LH100. In addition, full access to all 1024 CVs in both service and ops programming mode.

Improved programming support to make it easier to program sound decoders, even higher current ones without the need for resistors or aftermarket programming boosters.

Of the list above, I was able to try out the full function support and locomotive stack, both very useful features.

Full Function Support

The previous version of the Set-100 supported functions F0 – F12, however, user access was somewhat clumsy. Functions F0 – F8 required only a single key press to activate, simply press the number on the keypad. Getting to F9 – F12 required using the '9' key as a kind of shift; once pushed, the user then activated F9 by pressing the '1' key, F10 using the '2' key, F11 using the '3' key, and F12 using the '4' key; basically add 8 to the key value to arrive at the function number. A workable approach, but not very intuitive.

I'm happy to report that not only does version V3.6 add support for all NMRA functions, F0 – F28, but it does so in a straightforward and easy to access method. The functions are grouped into three groups, F0 – F9, F10 – F19, and F20 – F28. Access to each group is provided using the '+' and '-' keys on the LH100. "Tick marks" in the display indicate the currently active group; one tick for group one, two ticks for group two, and three ticks for group three. The numeric keys 0 – 9 correspond to each function, depending upon the activate group. For example, to access F4 activate group one by pressing the '+' key until one tick is displayed, then press '4.' To access F21 activate group three by pressing the '+' key twice then press '1.' It's easy, intuitive, and takes advantage of the LH100 simple keyboard. I really like it.

This change in the use of the '+' and '-' keys necessitated moving the speed step change procedure. In the previous version of the Set-100, pressing the '+' and '-' keys cycled between 28, 128, 14, and 27 speed steps (referred to as "throttle notches"). In version V3.6 that functionality has been moved to the "Setting Locomotive Decoder Features" function of the LH100 function menu (F1).

Locomotive Stack

Pressing the 'Esc' key on the previous version of the LH100 allowed

switching between two locomotive addresses. In version V3.6 that has been increased to a maximum of 12 locomotive addresses, but can be configured as a smaller stack if you prefer. Once again, it is very easy to use. Simply press the 'Esc' key to step through each address in the stack. If you happen to step past the address you'll need to continue around the stack until it appears again (in other words, you can't back up). As I often operate three or four locomotives with one throttle, the bigger stack comes in handy.

Improved User Manuals

Not mentioned in the press release, the user manuals for both the LH100 and LZV100 have been updated to include the new features; this is to be expected. Pleasantly surprising to me, they have also reorganized portions of the manuals, making it easier to find topics, as well as adding cross-references between sections when needed. I did notice a few typos and missing page references, but all in all these are a welcome improvement over the previous manuals. To see for yourself, go to the Manuals section of the Lenz web site and download both of them in Adobe PDF format.

Upgrading Your Current Set-100

There are basically two ways of getting your current system upgraded to version V3.6; you can send it to Lenz for upgrade, or you can request the electronic parts from them and do the upgrade yourself. The microcontrollers in the LH100 and LZV100 read their instructions from a memory device called an EPROM. In principle, all that needs to happen is change out the current EPROMs with the new ones. As simple as this may sound, my advice to everyone is to send in their units to Lenz for the upgrade. You'll need to contact Lenz for the necessary details, but believe me, this is the best way.

Why do I recommend this? I'm an electrical engineer by training and have various hand tools needed to work on electronic circuit boards. I elected to do the upgrade myself thinking it couldn't be that hard to remove a few screws, pull an EPROM from its socket, insert the new chip, and then close everything up again; and frankly, it shouldn't be. But the upgrade instructions provided by Lenz clearly had not been proofread; in fact I'm not even sure anyone tried out the procedure themselves. The instructions have a handful of typographical errors; although none are serious, they are very distracting. More disconcerting is that the instructions leave out an important step needed to disassemble the LZV100. The instructions say to remove the four screws in the back panel, and then slide out the two circuit boards. Unfortunately, they neglect to mention the two hidden screws in the side of the cabinet, which hold the power transistors to the cabinet as a heatsink. You have to slide out a metal panel and remove those two screws before you can slide out the circuit boards. Once removed, you can replace the integrated circuit per the instructions and put everything back together again. As I said, it's not a difficult procedure, but it's not a well-documented one either.

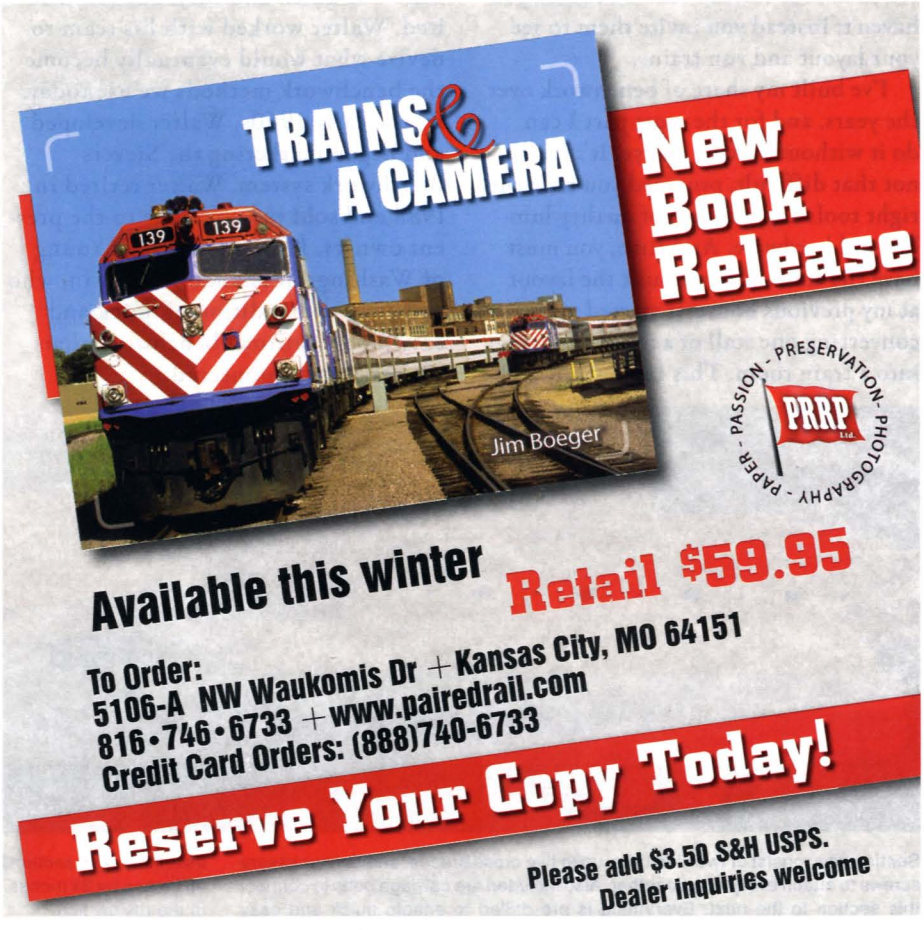
In order to convert the LH100 throttle you'll need a special TORX screwdriver (the one whose tip looks like a six-pointed star) to take apart the case. I happen to have a size 10, or T10, that did the job, but most folks don't have one of these lying around. The instructions do suggest buying one at Sears. Once the case is apart you'll need a special chip puller to remove the integrated circuit, again not something you normally have around the house.

As a final step in the upgrade, a system reset must be performed on both the LZV100 and LH100. This resets everything back to the factory defaults, so if you had changed any settings (e.g., track voltage output) you'll need to reconfigure those again.

All in all, I highly recommend sending the unit to Lenz for conversion. They have the tools and the expertise to perform the conversion quickly and professionally.

Wrapping Up

This is a worthwhile upgrade for your Lenz System. Whether you operate sound-equipped locomotives or silent ones, the improved programming capabilities and support for all NMRA functions are a welcome enhancement. And the increased locomotive stack is pretty cool too!



REVIEW **Prefabricated Benchwork**

Benchwork in a Jiffy

Review and Photos by Phil Scandura

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Sievers Benchwork
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www.sieversbenchwork.com

WHY be a carpenter, when you would rather be laying rails? It's a fair question, one posed by the Sievers Benchwork literature. While I have nothing against the field of carpentry, building fine furniture or cabinetry is a far cry from building model railroad benchwork. After all, how many of you have invited friends over to see your cool benchwork? Of course you haven't; instead you invite them to see your layout and run trains.

I've built my share of benchwork over the years, and for the most part I can do it without batting an eye. It's really not that difficult, provided you have the right tools and a supply of quality lumber and hardware. And time, you must have the time. When I built the layout at my previous house, it started with converting one stall of a three-car garage into a train room. This took nearly eighteen months, working on weekends when I had the time. Building the benchwork took several more weeks, much of that running back and forth to the lumberyard for supplies. Finally, I arrived at the point of track laying and wiring, followed soon thereafter by running trains. Ah yes, finally the fun part! I remember my wife commenting that the journey was often more fun that getting there. I agreed, but for me the fun part of the journey started with track laying, not carpentry!

A Notable History

Sievers Benchwork traces their roots back to Walter Schutz of the Delta Manufacturing Company in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. While serving as editor of a woodworking newsletter, Walter was contacted in 1952 by *Model Railroader* magazine for ideas on how to create a support system for model railroads that was sturdy, flexible, and supported elevation changes. Up until this point, the typical approach was to mount train layouts on a sheet of plywood set up on sawhorses. This was quick and easy, but very limited. Walter worked with his team to devise what would eventually become the benchwork methods we use today. By the early 1960s, Walter developed and began marketing the Sievers Benchwork system. Walter retired in 1988 and sold the company to the present owners, Howard and Ann Young of Washington Island, Wisconsin, who continue the tradition of quick and easy model railroad benchwork that Walter Schutz pioneered.

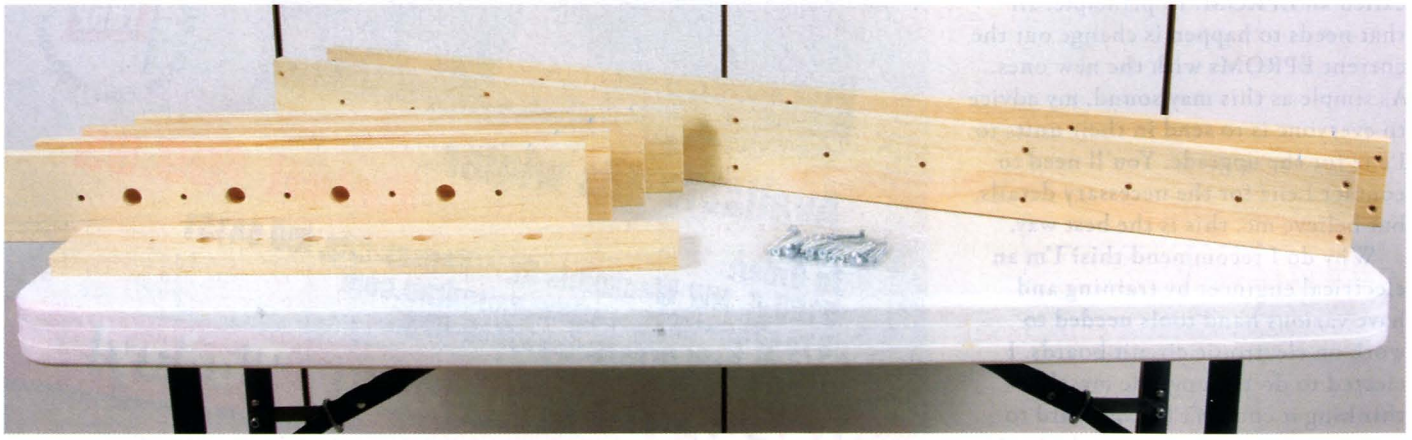
Flexibility

Sievers Benchwork consists of a number of different sized open-grid sections, along with matching legs. Modules are designed as bolt-together kits, and can be attached to surrounding modules in nearly any pattern to support a particular layout footprint.

Constructed of 3/4-inch by 3-1/2 inch No. 2 pine, all kits include lumber, hardware, and instructions. The lumber is sanded, pre-drilled, and countersunk. In addition, cross braces include several 3/4-inch holes to accommodate wires and cables.

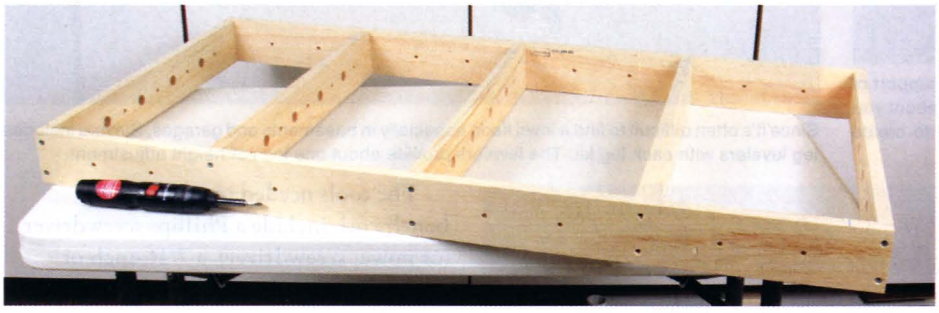
Section kits are available in standard widths of 36-, 30-, 24-, 20-, 18-, 16-, and 12-inches wide. Standard lengths are 48-, 36-, 30-, 24-, and 16-inches long. Section kits range in price from $62 for the largest 36 by 48 inch section kit, down to $14.70 for the smallest 12 by 16 inch section kit. Note that section kits do not include the layout top surface (i.e., plywood, foam, etc.); this must be supplied by the modeler.

Leg kits include enough parts to construct a single leg assembly. Leg kits consist of two legs, one cross brace and two leg levelers with t-nut inserts and hardware. The top of each leg is cut using a dado joint to provide support of the section using not only the attachment bolt, but the dado joint as well (see photos). Leg kits are available in the standard widths listed above, in two heights, 40 inches high and 48 inches high. Leg kits range in price from $26.90 to $27.55. Sievers recommends one leg assembly be placed every 3- to 4-feet around the layout.

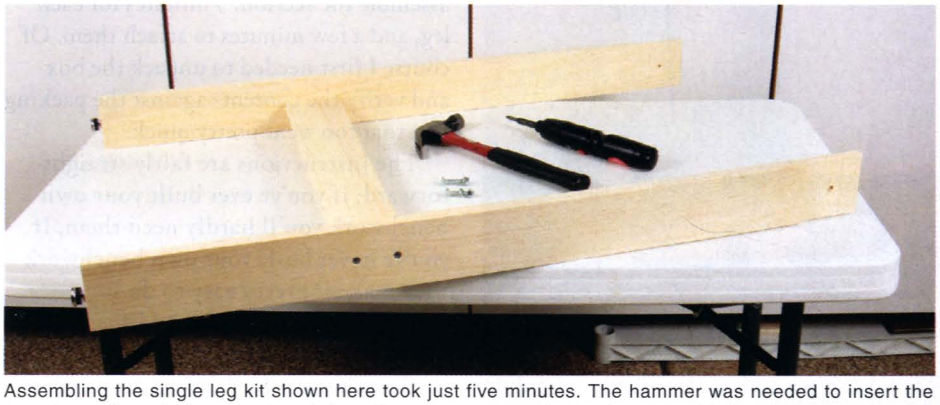


Section kits consist of two side rails, up to five cross braces, and the necessary screws to attach everything together. Also included are carriage bolts to connect this section to the next. Everything is pre-drilled to enable quick and easy assembly. The section kit shown here is the size of a standard NTRAK module, 48 inches by 24 inches. Many other standard sizes are available, as discussed in the review text.

Leg kits include enough parts to construct a single leg assembly. This includes two legs, one cross brace, leg levelers, and attachment hardware. The single leg kit shown here is sized to fit the section kit under review, and is 40 inches high, allowing it to mate with other NTRAK modules. 48-inch-high leg kits are also available.



In just ten minutes the section kit was assembled using only a power screwdriver. Look closely and you'll see the 3/4-inch pre-drilled holes in the cross members to accommodate wire routing. Other holes evenly spaced around the module can be used for attaching risers, L-girder extensions, and bolting multiple modules together.



Assembling the single leg kit shown here took just five minutes. The hammer was needed to insert the t-nut levers into the bottom of each leg. Sievers recommends one leg assembly be placed every 3 to 4 feet around the layout.

Sievers also offers 30-degree and 45-degree angled sections to match the standards widths, as well as riser and L-girder extension kits. For a complete listing of the various sections, legs, and parts available, visit the Sievers web site. There you can also download a planning package, making it easy to determine how many Sievers modules you'll need for your layout.

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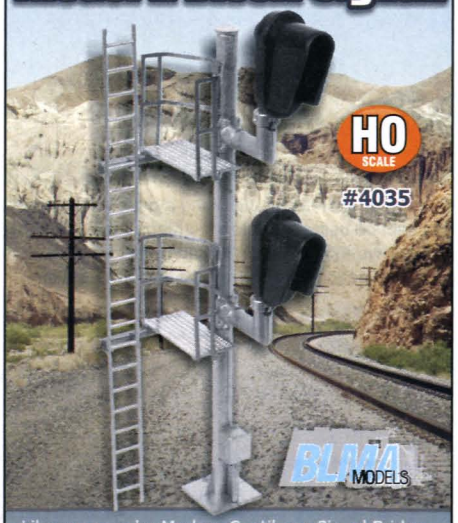

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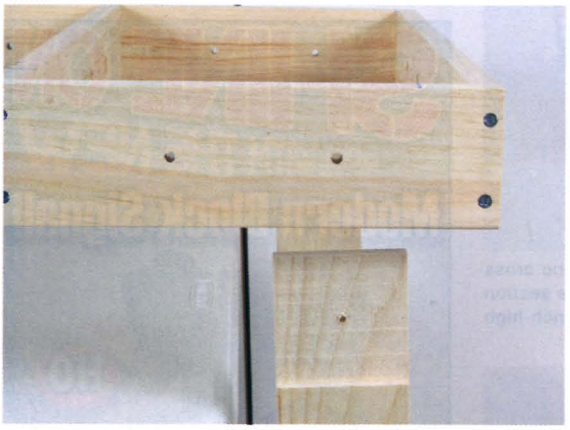
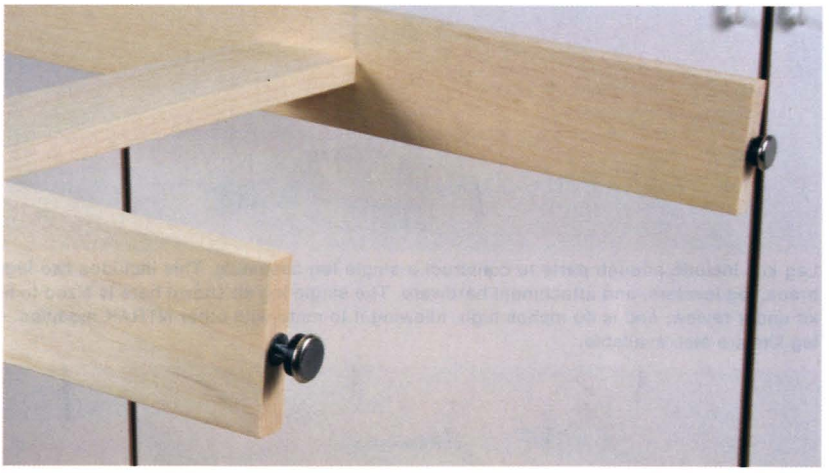
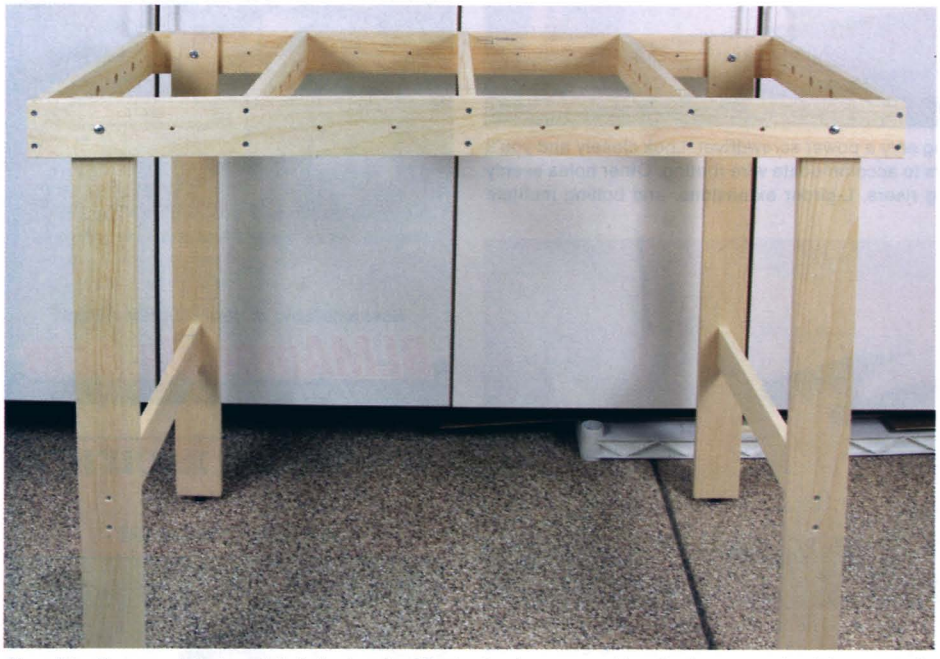


The top of each leg is cut using a dado joint to provide support of the section using a single attachment bolt. I don't know about you, but my workshop doesn't include the tools necessary to create accurate dado joints so this is a real time-saver.



Since it's often difficult to find a level floor, especially in basements and garages, Sievers includes leg levelers with each leg kit. The levelers provide about one inch of height adjustment.



Here it is, the completed module in just under 30 minutes from unpacking the box to putting it in your train room. It's accurately sized, easy to build, and no mess to clean up. Benchwork in a jiffy!

tons and are fully insured; there is no packing or handling charge. Shipping costs for orders under $100 are 15 percent of the benchwork total; for orders over $100 it is 10 percent of the total. These costs are approximate, Sievers will either refund or bill you for any difference in actual shipping costs, once your order is packed and weighed.

For review, *Model Railroad News* chose a 24-inch by 48-inch section kit and two matching 40-inch leg assembly kits. This is the typical size used for NTRAK modules. The measured weight of the assembled section (without the legs attached) is 7 pounds; each leg weighs 2.5 pounds for a total module weight (section and legs) of approximately 12 pounds. Of course your choice of layout surface (i.e., plywood, foam, spline roadbed, etc.) and added scenery will determine the overall module weight.

Assembly

Now that we've discussed the various kit details, it's time to have some fun building our benchwork. That's right, I used the word "fun" and "benchwork" in the same sentence. Let's see why.

The wood is straight and very clean without knots, chips, or splits. The holes are cleanly drilled and countersunk where necessary. There is no sawdust or waste. Frankly I could have assembled the entire module in my living room, but to maintain domestic relations I thought it better to use the garage.

The tools needed to assemble the benchwork include a Phillips screwdriver (or power screwdriver), a 7/16-inch or adjustable wrench to attach the leg bolts, and a hammer to insert the t-nuts. The time needed is under half an hour! Yes you heard correctly. It took me 10 minutes to assemble the section, 5 minutes for each leg, and a few minutes to attach them. Of course I first needed to unpack the box and verify the contents against the packing list; that too went pretty quick.

The instructions are fairly straightforward; if you've ever built your own benchwork you'll hardly need them. If you've never built your own benchwork they make it pretty easy to do so.

Value?

So we've just built an entire module ready for layout top and track in less than thirty minutes at a cost of just under $100. Was it worth it? No doubt you can go to the local lumberyard and purchase the necessary lumber and hardware for much less than $100. You'll need a way to get it home since eight-foot pieces of lumber don't fit in just any car. Once you get home you'll need access to the right tools to measure, cut, and drill the lumber, then assemble it. And finally you'll need the time. Frankly, it all comes down to the value of your time. That includes traveling to the lumberyard to buy the materials, sorting through stacks of lumber to find straight and clean pieces, getting the materials home, setting up the tools, cutting and assembling the pieces together, and then finally cleaning up the mess. With the help of Sievers I did the equivalent of all of that in just under 30 minutes. How long will it take you?

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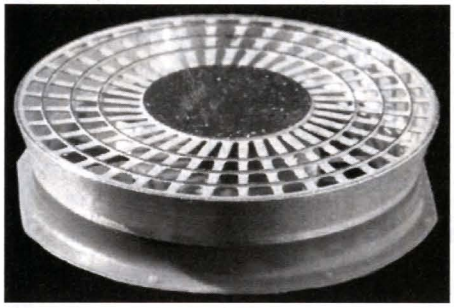
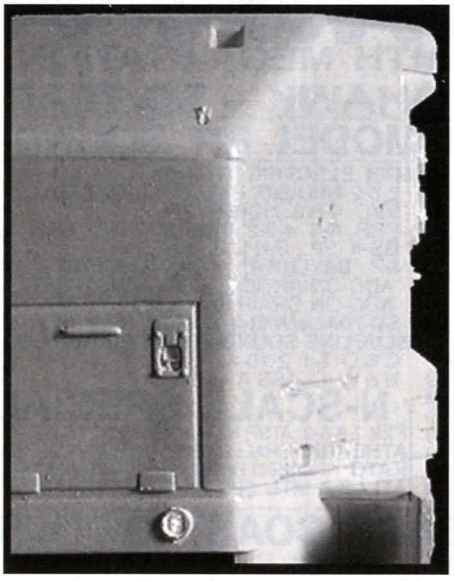
New detail parts from Cannon and Co.

HO — Cannon and Company has announced the release of their newest details, a 48-inch radiator fan, cast front F plates, and a step set for the Athearn Genesis F45/FP45.



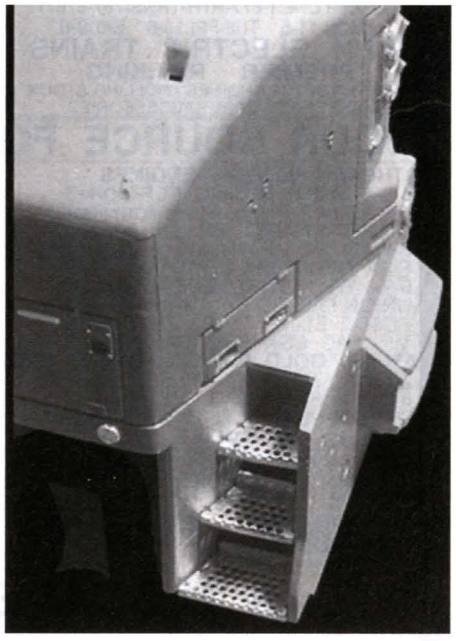
The radiator fan was a distinctive feature on EMD GP20s, but also appeared on many other models. The radiator features the same fan base and motor hubs as Cannon and Co's existing 48-inch radiator fans along with a precision machined flared shroud, and a new multilayer photo-etched grill. The radiator (#RF-1708) retails for $12.50 for a pair.

New EMD cast front F plates are also available. Most models of EMD locomotives either had the letter F stenciled on



the frame or had a Cast Plate with the raised Letter F, to designate the Front of the Locomotive. These photo-etched parts represent those cast plates. These are an easy detail to add to existing models for that extra bit of realism. The plates (#FD-2027) retails for $4.95 for twenty plates.

New photo etched brass step sets are available. The steps will modify the



Athean Genesis F45/FP45 with see-through steps. The steps (#SS-2028) retail for $4.95 a set.

Cannon and Company, 28332 Millwood Rd, Trabuco Canyon, CA 92679-1211; 949-465-4256; Fax: 949-858-3905; E-mail: dhussey@parker.com; www.cannonandco.net

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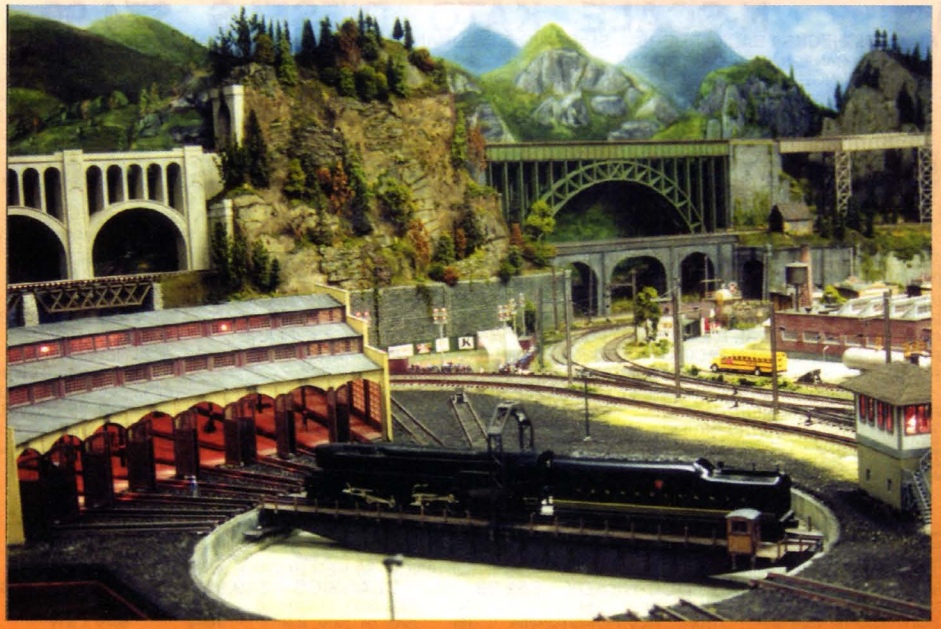

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Bottomside Creeper Lets You Work Under Your Layout In Comfort

TOOL — Micro-mark has released the Bottomside Creeper to maximize reach and comfort while working down under.

According to the company, the steel frame is contoured to lift the body to the optimum position for working on bench work, wiring, and switch machines. The Bottomside Creeper features a padded backrest with integral lever-action headrest inclines to three positions above horizontal, and industrial-strength casters. The overall size is 26 inches by 44 inches by 12 inches. The Bottomside Creeper (#84263) retails for $104.95.

Micro-Mark, 340 Snyder Ave., Berkeley Heights, NJ 07922-1538; 908 464-6764; Fax: 908 665-9383; E-mail: MMTechService@att.net; www.micromark.com

Bachmann offers new detail parts for K-27

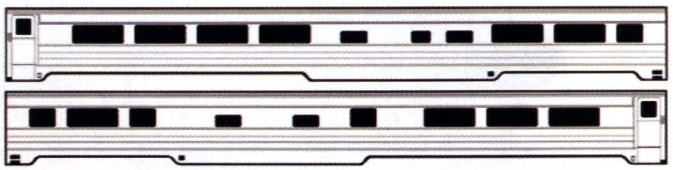
Bachmann is now offering additional detail parts for their Fn3 K-27

1:20.3 — Bachmann is offering optional parts for their 1:20.3 scale K-27 2-8-2 locomotives. In addition to various coupler parts, they are also making the K-27's three types of pilots available along with the tender "doghouse" where a brakeman could watch the train to the rear. Railroads often changed the pilots of steam locomotives when they altered their assignments, so regardless of what pilot came on your K-27, you can change pilots and add a doghouse to suit your needs.

As shown in the photo from left to right, there's the Road Pilot, the Snow Plow, and the Switcher Pilot with the Doghouse to the rear. Necessary additional parts are included with each. The switcher pilot (#88015) and Road Pilot (#88016) have a list price of $20.00. The Snow Plow lists for $25.00, while the Doghouse with Interior is $23.00.

Bachmann Industries, 1400 E. Erie Ave., Philadelphia, PA 19124-5698; 215-533-1600; Fax: 215-744-4699; www.bachmanntrains.com

New Budd Vista-Dome coach sides from Brass Car Sides



N — Brass Car Sides has released their photoetched brass car sides for the classic Budd Vista-Dome coaches operated on the Great Northern's *Empire Builder* (1955-71) and the Northern Pacific's *North Coast Limited* (1954-71). The cars were numbered as follows by the owner railroads: GN 1320-1331, SP&S 1332, CB&Q 1333-1335, NP 549-556,CB&Q 557-558, and SP&S 559. The cars were purchased by Amtrak in 1971 and operated in their original colors for a number of years before repainting and renumbering.

These brass sides are designed to convert the Con-Cor corrugated-side 424-series Budd mid-train dome by overlay or partial replacement of that model's plastic sides. The conversion kit comes with a sheet of modeling suggestions and technical and historical references. The Budd Vista-Dome Coach sides for *Empire Builder* and *North Coast Ltd.* (#173-520) retails for $21.75.

We originally ran a press release for this item in our October 2008 edition, but the description of the set was incorrect. We apologize for any inconvenience this may have caused our readers.

Brass Car Sides, 715 S 7th St, Saint Peter, MN 56082-1435; 507-931-2784; E-mail: dchenry@gac.edu; www.brasscarsides.com

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REVIEW **HO,S,&O**

Matysik Display Shelf is a real show-off

This sample of HO ShelfTrax shows the grooves on the upper surface into which the model's wheels fit, and the v-groove on the bottom, for the mounting screws.

Review and Photos by Pete Birdsong, MMR

Six-Foot O/S combination display shelf, MSRP: $35.00
Six-Foot O, S or On30 display shelves, MSRP: $30.00
Six-Foot HO display shelf, MSRP: $22.00

Matysik Displays, LLC
4412 Lavalle Dr.
Sheboygan, WI 53081
920-452-8945
www.matysikdisplays.com

WE WERE pleased to have an opportunity to review Matysik Displays' ShelfTrax model train display shelves, particularly since these products cross a broad range of model railroad scales, and represent something a little off the beaten path of our normal product reviews.

These nicely finished wood shelves are grooved to take the wheels of model railroad equipment in various scales and gauges, and put them on display. They are easily installed, and represent a very modest investment.

The Company

Matysik Displays is the company of Mike Matysik, a professional woodworker and a model train enthusiast from Sheboygan, Wisconsin. The shelving is produced on a large molding machine in a professional cabinet shop, using four specially designed knives, which cut the grooves in a single pass. I found Mike to be very responsive to questions and willing to work creatively on product design.

The Product

ShelfTrax consists of finely grained, low moisture content, rough-sawn red oak lumber, milled to serve as shelving for model railroad locomotives and rolling stock. Three different stock sizes are offered: O/S combination, O/S/On30, and HO. All come in a six-foot length, with a natural finish, but Mike does custom lengths and finishes as well. In fact, the On30 shelf I received for review was a custom job, milling HO grooves in the stock normally used for O scale shelves. I also received short samples of the HO and O products. The On30 shelf measured 0.754 inches thick by 3.527 inches wide (nominal 1x4). The O shelf is 0.755 by 3.519, (nominal 1x4) and the HO .511 by 1.98. (one-half by two, four quarter stock)

The milling produces grooves on the upper and lower surfaces of the shelf: on the upper surface, two scale-gauge grooves, into which the wheels of your rolling stock fit, run the length of the shelf. On the bottom surface, a v-groove also runs the length of the shelf, and has been pre-drilled on 16-inch centers, for screwing to the studs in the wall on which the shelf is to be mounted.

Each end of the shelf is pre-drilled to accept small pegs which serve as end stops, to keep models from rolling off the end. The pegs are provided with the product, as are self-drilling mounting screws.

For putting together longer shelving units, metal mending plates are offered at $3.00 each. These screw to the bottoms of the two shelves to be joined.

The ShelfTrax product is shipped securely padded with foam on each end and in intermediate locations, and completely sealed in a plastic wrapper, and packed inside a cardboard carton with a glossy marketing brochure and a letter with mounting instructions. It arrived without any damage. No warranty information is included in the materials shipped, but a warranty statement is on the web site in the Frequently Asked Questions page.

Mounting the Shelf

The company web site provides a video

A closeup indicates how easy it is to mount equipment on the shelf. The rear wheels are in the groove, the front ones out. To move them into the grooves, just slide them over until they fall in: much easier than railing stock on track, since you don't have to lift the wheels over the rails.

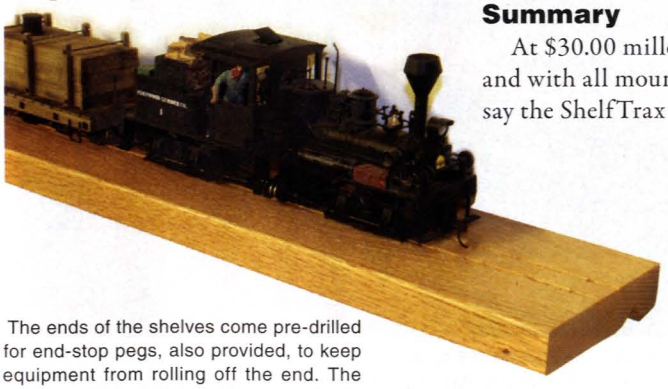
The shelves are rated to hold over 12 pounds per foot. I put 73.5 pounds on this six-foot piece without any problems (but it was scary!)

which runs about two and one-half minutes, providing detailed instructions for drilling additional holes in the v-groove, for those cases in which wall studs are not on sixteen-inch centers. Otherwise, if using the pre-drilled holes, the only tools needed are a #2 square bit to drive the self-drilling square-drive mounting screws, a level, and someone to help hold the shelf up while you drive the screws.

The shelves come with mounting holes pre-drilled every 16 inches for square-drive, self-drilling mounting screws, provided. The screws are to be driven into studs behind the wallboard, which usually are on 16-inch centers also.

A measuring tape and pencil may also come in handy, and an awl is useful for making starter holes for the screws in the sheetrock.

I selected the height I wanted, and with a helper holding the shelf in position, put in a screw at one end; then, with the helper positioning the shelf with a level, put a screw in the other end. The remaining screws can be driven without any help. Inserting the end stops completed the installation.



The ends of the shelves come pre-drilled for end-stop pegs, also provided, to keep equipment from rolling off the end. The holes can be seen here, prior to pushing in the pegs as the final step in installation.

Testing

The product is rated to support over twelve pounds per foot, according to the information I received from the owner. After mounting the shelf, I stacked 73.5 pounds of dumbbell weights on it, exceeding the rating by 1.5 pounds, with no sagging or other adverse affects, and this shelf was short one of the mounting screws, for which I had no stud.

Measured with an NMRA Mark IVb HO track gauge, and with a micrometer, the grooves checked as in gauge. I filled the shelf with several On30 locomotives and cars from my layout, and found the cars all rolled easily in the grooves, and everything presented a very nice appearance. The HO sample's grooves also were in correct gauge.

I didn't have an NMRA O-scale track gauge, but measured with a micrometer, the grooves in the O sample were 1.232 inches wide, slightly narrower than the NMRA standard minimum of 1.250 inches. Responding to my question about the gauge discrepancy, Mike Matysik indicated that his original molding knives for O standard were in gauge, but were too wide for some three-rail equipment, so his new molding knives are a compromise to fit the most rolling stock. Since the shelves are not going to be used for operating equipment, that seems like a good choice. And a scale O standard gauge car I tested fit in the grooves of the sample and rolled easily.

Summary

At $30.00 milled, pre-drilled, finished, and with all mounting hardware, I'd say the ShelfTrax product is a bargain. Beautiful in its simplicity, easy to install, and with the unmistakable look of quality, this is a product on which you'll be proud to display your best, contest-quality models.

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Project DCC - Integrating Operation and Automation
Part 7B, Signal System Wiring for ZIMO and Atlas/Dallee

— By Phil Scandura

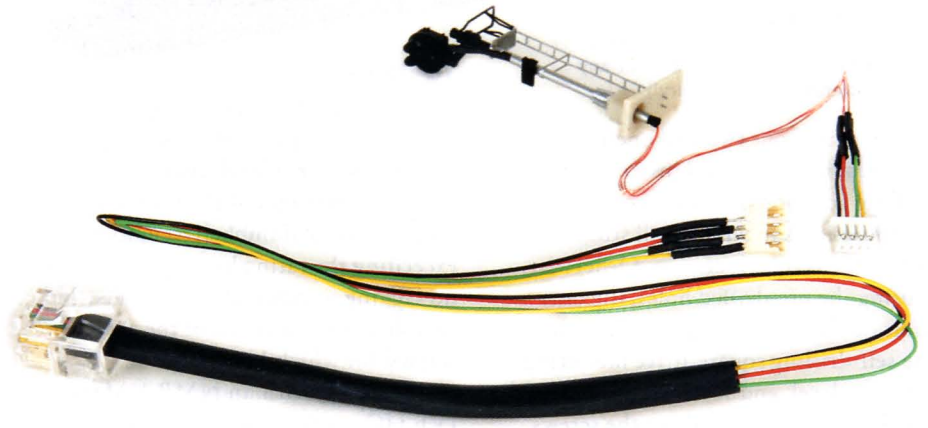
Last month we installed trackside signals using the Digitrax and Lenz system. This month we continue with coverage of the ZIMO and Atlas/Dallee systems.

ZIMO MX8S

The ZIMO MX8S Accessory Module provides 32 outputs that can be configured to operate as paired functions (to drive turnouts) or single functions (to drive bulbs). Three modes of operation are available: 16 paired functions; 8 paired functions and 16 single functions; or 32 single functions. For Project DCC we are using the MX8S to drive the signal LEDs, so it must be configured to support 32 single functions (more on the need for the MX8S shortly).

As noted with other ZIMO devices, the MX8S must be configured before use (you cannot simply use it out of the box). The MX8S requires an address to be set and operating mode chosen (the default is 16 paired functions). Simply configuring the mode is not enough, however, as the MX8S includes several configuration variables (CVs) that must be changed as well. In particular, CVs 515, 516, 517, and 518 control the "time on" of the outputs. When used to control turnouts, the default setting is 0.2 seconds (to prevent solenoid burnout). Since we want to illuminate LEDs, these CVs must be changed to '0' which means continuous (no time out). If you don't change these CVs the LEDs will just barely come on and then go out.

While I don't mind making configuration changes, it would be helpful if the ZIMO documentation provided a "quick start" section. Often times I found myself wading through pages of CV definitions in order to determine why a device wasn't working the way I expected. By "quick start" I mean a short section that explains the different operating modes of the device, and the applicable CVs that should be changed. Using the MX8S as an example, the user's manual explained how to change the mode for 32 single functions, but didn't bother to explain the need to change the "time on" CVs. One simple sentence would have saved me 15 or 20 minutes of debugging.



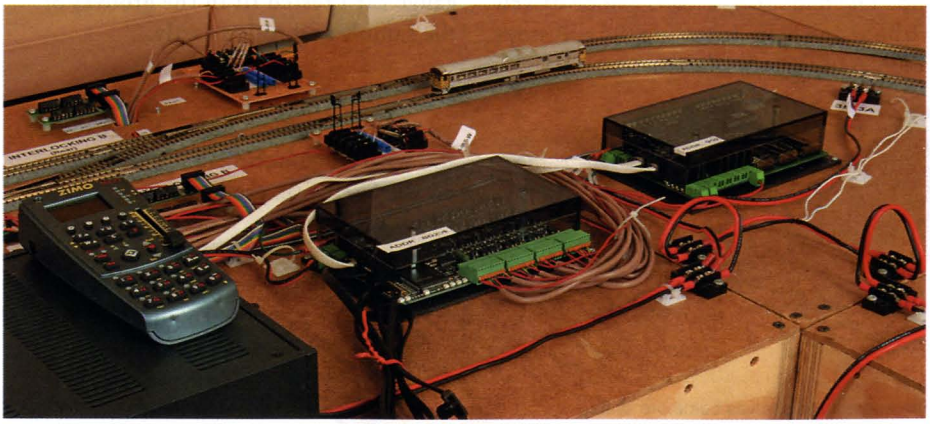
This is one example of the different types of Atlas signals used on the layout. Similar to the NJI signals discussed last month, Atlas signals use extremely fine wire inside the signal mast. In contrast to NJI, Atlas provides a modular plug system to simplify wiring. The clear plastic RJ-11 connector (shown on the left) plugs into the Signal Control Board (SCB), while the small white modular connectors plug together to join the trackside signal to the SCB. The overall wire length is approximately 16 inches. Atlas signals do not include current limiting resistors, choosing instead to put them on the SCB. Unlike the NJI signals, the Atlas LEDs are wired in a common cathode fashion, which means the common wire is "negative" and each LED wire is "positive." This presents a problem only when mixing signal systems, as further discussed in the text.

Getting back to the need for the MX8S Accessory Module, we find ourselves in an interesting situation. Similar to the Lenz BM3, the ZIMO MX9V Track Section Module (installed during our track assembly and block detection installment) is a self-contained occupancy detection and signal generation device that supports eight blocks and their associated signals. Being of European heritage, however, it only supports two-light signals. Wanting to represent a US prototype, Project DCC uses three-light signals. That means we can't use the signal generation feature of the MX9V and instead must use the MX8S to drive the various signal LEDs around the layout.

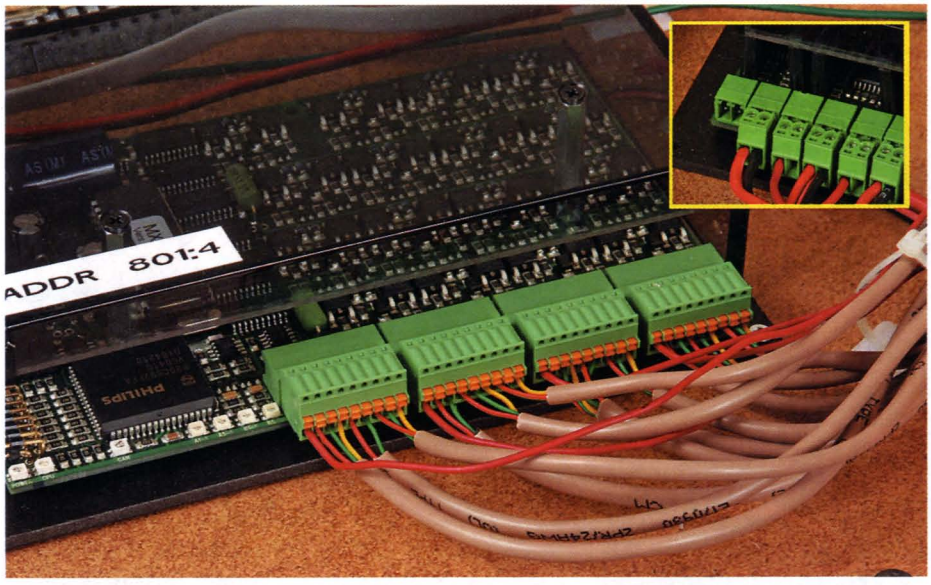
Since the MX8S is a separate device from the MX9V (similar to the relationship between the Digitrax SE8C and BDL168), we now need a computer and software to drive the signals by issuing on/off commands to the MX8S based on the occupancy detection provided by the MX9V.

Atlas and Dallee

The Atlas signal system consists of the trackside signal, decorative relay shed, Signal Circuit Board (SCB), and Block Detector Board (BDB). Offered in three scales (N, HO, and O), the system was originally designed for use on traditional DC or AC layouts. *Model Railroad News* previously reviewed the



When configured in single function mode, the ZIMO MX8S Accessory Module can handle up to 32 incandescent bulbs or LEDs (current limiting resistors are required). Based upon the number of signal heads on the Project DCC layout, it would require three MX8S modules to handle the entire layout. Shown here is one of the MX8S modules (center) and MX9V Track Section Modules (right) used for the left leg of the layout.

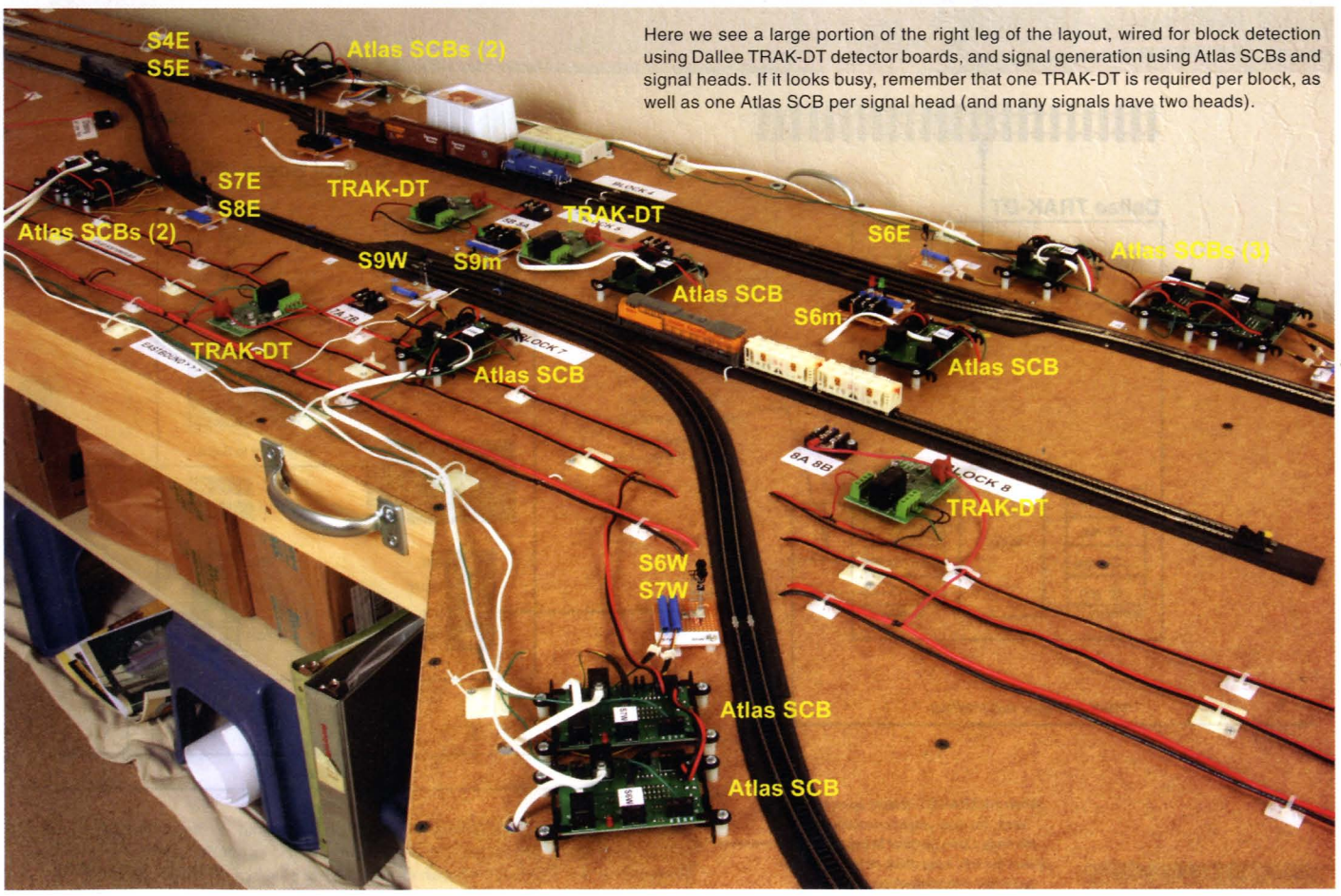


This close-up view highlights the cable connectors used by the ZIMO MX8S, a type of press-fit connector in which the wire is pushed into the hole. Solid wire is much better for this type of connector, rather than stranded wire. Frankly, I prefer the screw-type connectors used by other ZIMO devices (see insert), although I imagine there probably wasn't enough room on the MX8S to accommodate them.

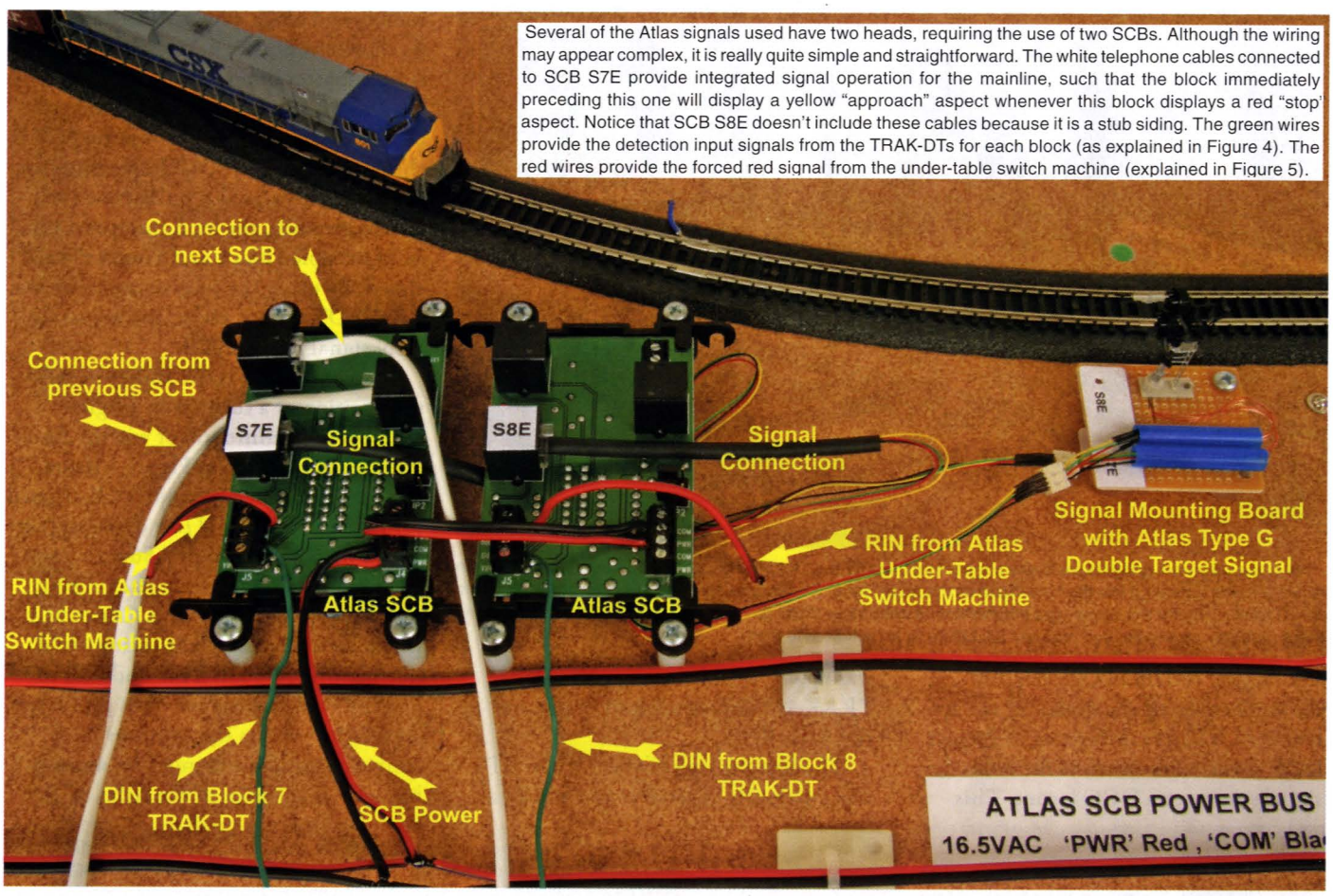
Atlas signal system in October 2007, so we won't cover all the details of the system here. The key difference in Project DCC is the application of the Atlas signal system to a DCC layout. This was made possible by using the Dallee TRAK-DT detector board in place of the Atlas BDB.

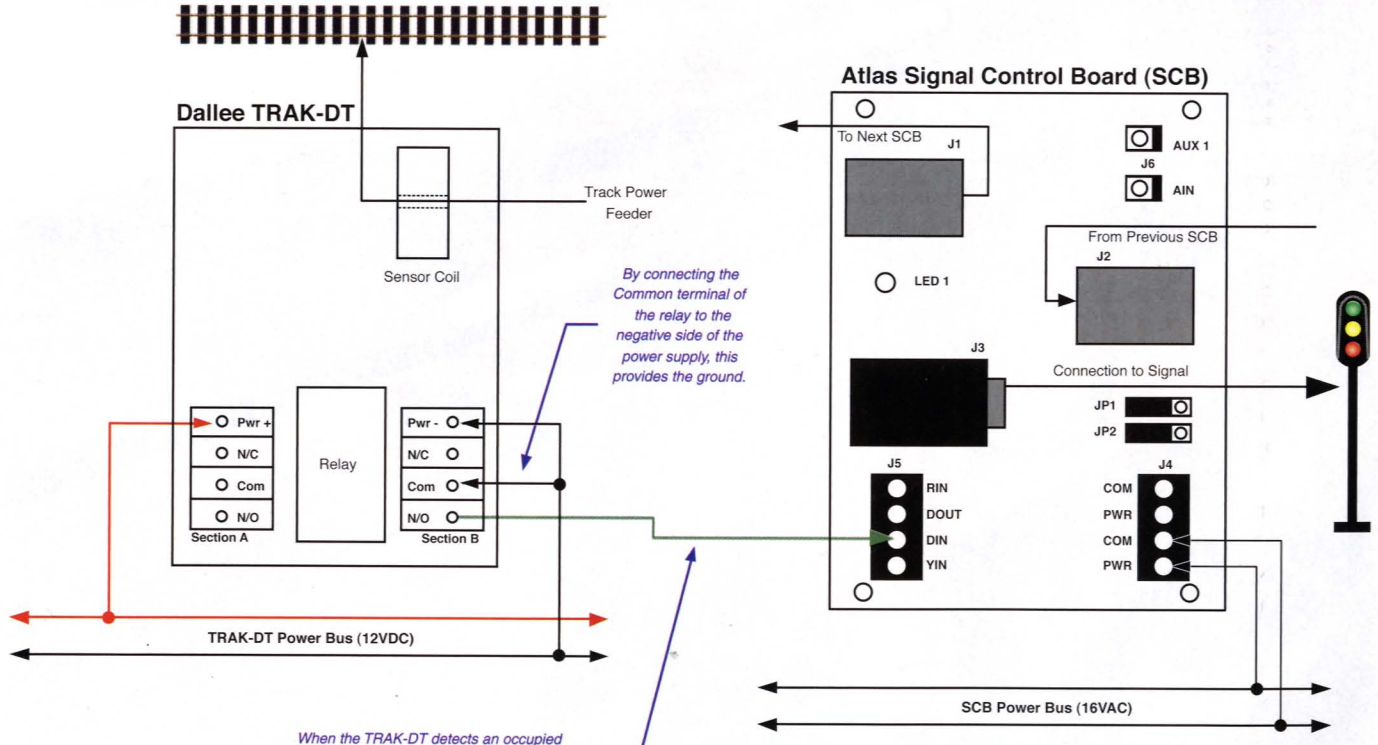
The basic wiring of the TRAK-DT was previously covered in our track assembly and block detection installment. As shown in **Figure 4**, it is a relatively simple matter of now connecting the TRAK-DT to the Atlas SCB. The electrical signal of interest on the SCB is the detector input, "DIN" on connector J5. When this signal is pulled low (i.e., tied to ground), the SCB interprets this as an occupied block and asserts the red signal. By using the relay contacts on the TRAK-DT we can create the necessary DIN signal for the SCB.

Also of interest is the ability to reflect the position of a turnout in a signal aspect with a minimum of wiring. As an example, look again at Figure 1 (from last month). When turnout T6 is aligned for the mainline, we'd like diverging signal S5W and dwarf signal S6m to present a red stop signal, since the turnout is not aligned to the siding. Conversely, when T6 is aligned to the siding, we'd like mainline signals S4W and S6E to present a red stop signal. This prototype approach prevents the engineer from running through a turnout set against him. Turning again to the Atlas SCB,



Here we see a large portion of the right leg of the layout, wired for block detection using Dallee TRAK-DT detector boards, and signal generation using Atlas SCBs and signal heads. If it looks busy, remember that one TRAK-DT is required per block, as well as one Atlas SCB per signal head (and many signals have two heads).


Several of the Atlas signals used have two heads, requiring the use of two SCBs. Although the wiring may appear complex, it is really quite simple and straightforward. The white telephone cables connected to SCB S7E provide integrated signal operation for the mainline, such that the block immediately preceding this one will display a yellow "approach" aspect whenever this block displays a red "stop" aspect. Notice that SCB S8E doesn't include these cables because it is a stub siding. The green wires provide the detection input signals from the TRAK-DTs for each block (as explained in Figure 4). The red wires provide the forced red signal from the under-table switch machine (explained in Figure 5).
Connection to next SCB
Connection from previous SCB
S7E
Signal Connection
S8E
Signal Connection
RIN from Atlas Under-Table Switch Machine
Atlas SCB
Atlas SCB
RIN from Atlas Under-Table Switch Machine
Signal Mounting Board with Atlas Type G Double Target Signal
DIN from Block 7 TRAK-DT
SCB Power
DIN from Block 8 TRAK-DT
ATLAS SCB POWER BUS
16.5VAC 'PWR' Red , 'COM' Bla



Drawing by Christy Halastik

Figure 4 - Connecting the Dallee TRAK-DT block detector to the Atlas SCB is a simple matter of pulling DIN to ground whenever a block is occupied. By using the relay contacts on the TRAK-DT we can create the necessary DIN signal for the SCB.

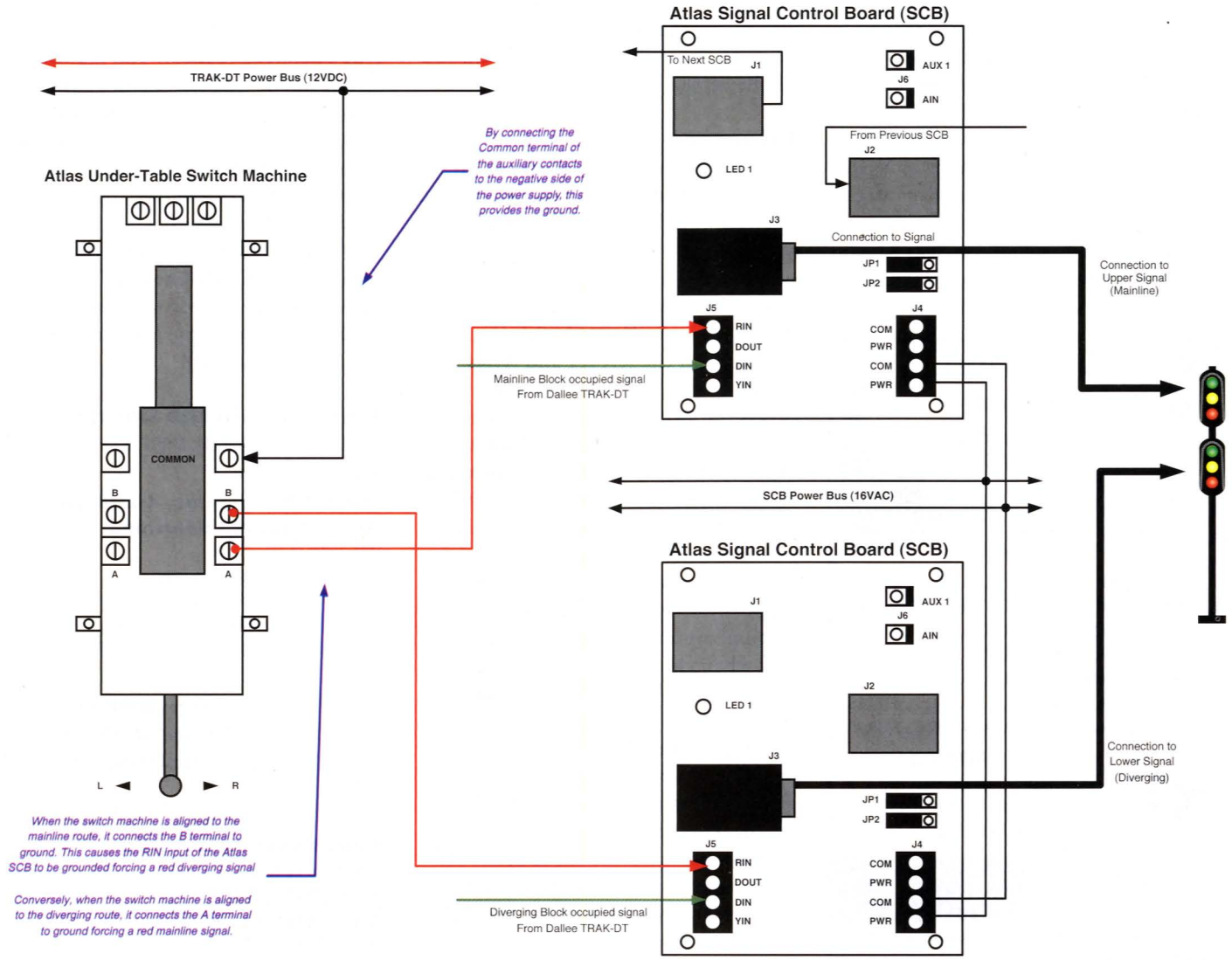

Atlas Signal Control Board (SCB)
TRAK-DT Power Bus (12VDC)
Atlas Under-Table Switch Machine
By connecting the Common terminal of the auxiliary contacts to the negative side of the power supply, this provides the ground.
To Next SCB
J1
AUX 1
J6
AIN
From Previous SCB
J2
LED 1
J3
Connection to Signal
JP1
JP2
Connection to Upper Signal (Mainline)
J5
RIN
DOUT
DIN
YIN
J4
COM
PWR
COM
PWR
Mainline Block occupied signal From Dallee TRAK-DT
COMMON
B
A
SCB Power Bus (16VAC)
Atlas Signal Control Board (SCB)
Connection to Lower Signal (Diverging)
L
R
When the switch machine is aligned to the mainline route, it connects the B terminal to ground. This causes the RIN input of the Atlas SCB to be grounded forcing a red diverging signal
Conversely, when the switch machine is aligned to the diverging route, it connects the A terminal to ground forcing a red mainline signal.
Diverging Block occupied signal From Dallee TRAK-DT

Figure 5 - Prototype railroads reflect the position of a turnout in the signal aspect to help prevent an engineer from running through a turnout set against the train. Shown here is the Project DCC approach using the Atlas under-table switch machine and SCB via the RIN signal. This approach forces the display of a red signal whenever the turnout is set against the signal. Drawing by Christy Halastik

the electrical signal of interest is "RIN" on connector J5. When this signal is tied to ground, the SCB immediately asserts the red signal, regardless of the current occupancy of the block. As shown in **Figure 5**, by using the auxiliary contacts on the Atlas under-table switch machine that we installed during the turnout control wiring installment (Part 6), we can trigger RIN based on turnout alignment. This same approach is used for turnouts T5 and T7, while T1 through T4 will be handled via the computer as discussed in a future installment of Project DCC.

Houston, We Have A Problem

As noted previously, the left leg of the layout is signaled using NJI signal products, while the right leg is signaled using Atlas signal heads and controller boards. There are a few signals on the right leg, however, that I had planned to use NJI signals with the Atlas SCB. Looking at **Figure 1**, the signals for the siding and stub (signals S3m, S6m, and S9m) are "dwarf signals" that are low to the ground, typically used on sidings and in yards. These signals are used to indicate the occupancy status of the mainline to a train on the siding wishing to enter the main. Atlas currently does not offer dwarf signals so it was decided to use those from NJI.

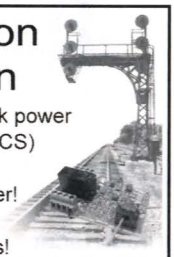
At first it was thought to be a simple task of creating a short cable to connect from the Atlas RJ-11 connector on the SCB to the screw terminal strip on the signal mounting board. Mechanically this would be no problem, however, electrically it is impossible. It was discovered that while the NJI signals are wired common anode (common wire is positive and each LED wire is negative), the Atlas signals and SCB are wired just the opposite in a common cathode configuration (common wire is negative and each LED wire is positive). This prevents the Atlas SCB from driving an NJI signal (or any brand that is common anode, for that matter). As a work-around a pair of off-the-shelf red/green LEDs had to be used in lieu of each NJI dwarf signal.

In addition, the mismatch prevented the plan to use the ZIMO MX8S

Accessory Module to drive the Atlas signal heads on the right leg of the layout, when wired in an all-ZIMO configuration. In fact, the Lenz BM-3, ZIMO MX8S and ZIMO MX9V are all designed to drive LED signals that are wired common anode (such as NJI). Only the Digitrax SE8C can be configured to drive either common anode or common cathode signals (such as Atlas).

Frankly either type of signal (common anode or common cathode) will work just as well for your layout; the key is to ensure the type of signal is compatible with the signal controller board you will be using.

Block Detection & Automation



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A Caveat

As the Project DCC layout is intended for demonstration only, certain liberties have been taken. The most notable is the use of different signaling systems simultaneously without fully integrating the two together. When the layout is configured with Digitrax signaling on the left leg and Atlas/Dallee on the right, the interface between the two is minimal. No attempt has been made to feed the block occupancy status of a Digitrax protected block to the Atlas/Dallee area, and vise versa. In other words, the transition blocks between the left and right leg are signaled, however, there is no support for the yellow "approach with caution" signal aspect. The same is true when the layout is wired for Lenz signaling on the left leg and Atlas/Dallee on the right.

It is possible to support multiple signaling systems on one layout, but it requires the ability to create suitable electrical interfaces between the systems. For most home layouts you're better off choosing one system and staying with it, rather than complicating your life with multiple systems.

Coming Next Month

Last month and this month we lit up our layout, adding trackside signaling that really brings a layout to life. No longer are trains simply running; now they are governed by signals, their movements controlled by some higher force. We are now well on our way to true operating realism. You may or may not decide to add signals to your home layout. Regardless of your decision, it is my hope that the next time you have a chance to visit a layout that is signaled you'll have a better appreciation for the work involved.

Please join me next month for "Integrating a Grade Crossing" when we explore the special wiring considerations needed when adding grade crossing signals. See you then!

Mentioned in the Column:

MX8S Accessory Module; MSRP: $435.00 (US), $485.00 (Canadian)

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—

N-scale Type G Single Target; MSRP: $36.25
N-scale Type G Double Target; MSRP: $48.35
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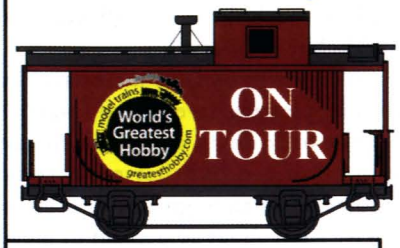

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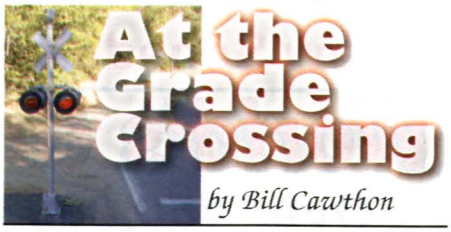
Atlas announces new Explorer and the economy takes a toll on prices



by Bill Cawthon

At the beginning of December, **Atlas** announced their new 1993 Ford Explorer in HO- and N-scales. They expect delivery in August of this year.

The Ford Explorer was introduced in 1990 as a 1991 model and was an immediate hit. With its combination of size, amenities, and features, it's fair to say the Explorer ignited America's love affair with the sport-utility vehicle. The Explorer also has been one of the models requested most by model railroaders and collectors and it's great to see Atlas coming out with it in both HO- and N-scale. This should be one of the year's "must-have" vehicle models.

Atlas also announced the pricing for the new Explorer: the HO model is $15.95 and the N-scale versions will set you back $22.95 per pair. As of the writing of this column, there will be no discount for the undecorated model, but that may change.

When the 2002 release of the Atlas 1996 Taurus model was announced, the price was just $5.95 for an undecorated model in HO scale and $8.95 for a painted version. The N-scale cars were sold at $7.95 per pair for undecs and $11.95 per pair for the ready-to-use painted models. Prices were the same for the 1997 Ford F-150 pickups when they were reissued a year later.

By the time the 1978 Ford Fairmont sedans were introduced early last year, the price had gone up a few dollars. An undecorated Fairmont sedan went for $8.95 and the painted cars were priced at $10.95. A pair of N-scale Fairmont sedans would set you back either $9.95 for the undecorated version or $13.95 for the pre-painted models. By the time the station wagon was announced last summer, the price was up to $11.95 for painted models in HO or $14.50 for painted models in N scale.

The latest prices are the biggest jump since 2002; compared to last summer's Fairmont wagons, the price of the HO Explorer is up more than 33 percent and the N two-pack is up more than 58 percent.

Before going any farther, it needs to be made perfectly clear that I am not being critical of Atlas; I have been talking about price increases like this coming for a while and now they are starting to appear.

Whenever a manufacturer has to raise prices, there is always bellyaching, which is perfectly understandable; after all, we didn't get a corresponding increase in our income to cover the new, higher price. Sometimes model railroaders complain about the "greed" of model railroad manufacturers. I recall a post in one of the online discussion groups in which the author described the "suits" toasting each other with champagne in the Four Seasons as they planned how best to gouge model railroaders. I think the guy was actually serious, but nothing could be farther from the truth. I've had working dinners with the senior people at several model railroad companies and I can promise you the meals were never at four-star restaurants and the champagne was definitely missing. And I don't recall anyone ever talking about how to gouge anyone. Quite the contrary, in meetings I have had with all of these people, one of the discussions has always been how to control costs to keep the retail price reasonable. I am in the business and this has been an ongoing challenge, especially in the past couple of years.

There have been stories in the news over the past year about the profound changes in the Chinese economy. But unless you are in the toy business, you probably don't realize how much these have affected the toy and hobby industry.

Costs of energy and raw materials like metals and plastics have soared (plastics have come back down a bit with the decline in oil prices, but they never come down as fast as they go up) and labor costs have risen about 30 percent or more. New programs instituted by the government in Beijing have added new costs and new initiatives have made the competition for skilled labor intense, driving costs up even more. In addition, the Chinese government has been trimming the ties between the value of the yuan renminbi, the currency on the Chinese mainland, and the dollar.

These changes have meant the traditional cost advantages enjoyed by the Chinese manufacturers are disappearing and a number of Chinese manufacturers are disappearing with them. In the past twelve months, more than 3,500 Chinese toy companies have gone out of business. That's about 50 percent of the entire Chinese toy industry. Last month, *Model Railroad News* reported **Sanda Kan**, one of the largest contract manufacturers of model railroading products, had been

Atlas' new 1993 Ford Explorer looks to be one of the top models of 2009. However, like every model made in China these days, it has to be priced to reflect the dramatic increases in the cost of everything from steel and other metals, labor and shipping. In addition, changes in Chinese monetary policy have made goods produced there more expensive. Image of Ford Explorer model courtesy of Atlas Model Railroad Co. Background by *Model Railroad News*.

Herpa's Magic models are still relatively inexpensive. They are packed two different colors to a package and 14 different cars are available. In the U.S. and Canada, the Magic model are available from Promotex. Image courtesy of Herpa Miniaturmodell GmbH.

taken over by the receivers and some of its assets had been purchased by **Kader Holdings**, the owners of **Bachmann**, among other brands. We knew from the regulatory filings that Sanda Kan had defaulted on millions of dollars in loans, but a friend of mine in the Hong Kong toy community told me Sanda Kan lost $100 million last year. And that's in U.S. dollars, not Hong Kong.

Some toy companies are already starting to source production from countries like Vietnam, but those countries don't yet have the industrial base or experienced, skilled labor needed for the products we want. This means paying the cost of Chinese production and factoring those costs into the retail price.

Compounding the problem for model railroaders is the disappearance of the inexpensive diecast cars from the shelves at **Wal-Mart**. They were a super deal while they lasted, but like so many things that are too good to be true, these were too good to last. The price point was just too low to make a profit and still be able to reinvest in new models. Most of the diecasts once sold at Wal-Mart are still available but they are now distributed through the hobby channel, which has increased the price.

There are other low-cost models available, as well. Among my favorites are still the Magic models made by **Herpa** and sold in North America by **Promotex**. They've gone up in price to about $4.75 each, but they are injection-molded plastic, nicely molded and easily disassembled for painting and detailing. There are currently 14 different European-prototype automobiles from the 1960s and 1970s in the Magic line and it's rumored another six sets will be introduced at this year's International Toy Fair in Nuremberg. Each package contains two models in different colors. The one shown in the accompanying photo is the Volkswagen 411 Variant, a three-door station wagon produced from 1968 to 1972. It was the last Volkswagen car to be powered by an air-cooled engine and one of the first cars to offer a fuel-injected engine as standard equipment. Other new features included unibody construction, MacPherson strut front suspension, rear suspension with coil springs and trailing wishbones, and a hydraulic clutch.

The Magic model represents a VW 411E as built from 1969 to 1972. The spotting feature is the four round headlights; the 1968 version had twin rectangular headlights. The real car had a 1.7-liter, fuel-injected, four-cylinder engine that produced about 80 horsepower. Even though it was considered underpowered, Volkswagen managed to sell 117,110 of the 411s in the United States. Incidentally, Volkswagen did use auto racks.

In spite of the new pricing, I think the new Atlas Explorer is going to be one of the hottest models of 2009 and I am certainly looking forward to them. It's too bad the release date comes after the 2009 N-scale national convention; I am pretty sure the Explorer would be almost a shoo-in for the N Scale Vehicle Association's New Model of the Year Award.

See you next month at the grade crossing!

—

If you have questions or comments for Bill Cawthon about model vehicles, e-mail them to: Gradecrossing@modelrailroadnews.com or snail mail them to: Grade Crossing, Model Railroad News, P.O. Box 1080, Merlin, OR 97532-1080.

Mentioned in this column:

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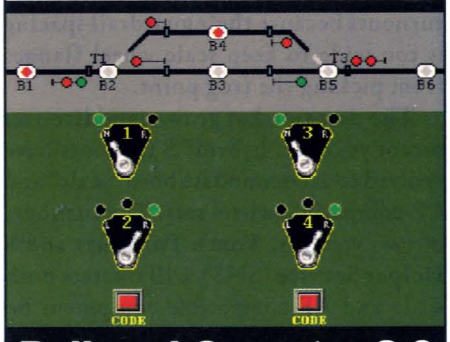

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Understanding S Wheel and Track Options

N, HO, and O two-rail modelers enjoy universal equipment interoperability regardless of who makes the wheels and track they buy. Such is not the case in S, whose bewildering variety of track and wheel options is enough to scare off all but the most determined of S-scale newbies. Because of this, when potential newcomers try to figure out what the "real" S scale is, their choice is usually "not" S.

So let me try to clear away the confusion. I've been in S for 59 years, and a scale modeler for 51 of those years. While I started with an **American Flyer** (AF) set, I gradually converted to scale, as did most of my contemporaries who were interested in 1/64 realism. We've stayed with S because of its potential, and our loyalty has been rewarded with a plethora of locomotives and rolling stock in both brass and plastic.

So what do I mean by "scale," specifically with regard to S? We all know that "scale" refers to the proportional reduction from the prototype. But because of the dominance of American Flyer (AF) fans, the word "scale" to S fans has come to differentiate **NMRA**-standard S-scale trackage and wheels from AF-compatible trackage and wheels. The thickness and depth of AF wheel flanges prevents AF-compatible equipment from operating on NMRA-standard trackage. Conversely, NMRA-standard S-scale wheel sets will not function properly on AF-compatible turnouts because their guardrail spacing is too wide to keep scale wheel flanges from picking the frog point.

The situation has grown muddier over recent years as "hybrid" S turnouts have evolved to accommodate both "scale" and AF-compatible wheel sets. The turnouts of two vendors, **Tom's Turnouts** and **S Helper Service** (SHS), will tolerate both scale and AF-compatible equipment because of novel frog designs. Tom's guardrails are spaced far enough from the running rails that they serve no function other than appearance. SHS turnouts don't have guardrails, period. But unless you want to run both AF and NMRA-standard equipment on your layout, my advice is to avoid hybrid turnouts.

Why? Well, track is a model too. But additionally, non-S modelers have come to implicitly rely on NMRA-standard equipment and trackage without perhaps ever realizing it. And if you move to S, you still have a right not to have to worry about interoperability. Sticking with S products that conform to NMRA wheel and track standards means you can stay in your comfort zone. S is blessed with NMRA-standard track (**Shinohara**, **Tomalco**, **SHS**) in several scale-appropriate rail heights (codes 70, 83, 100, and 125). If you aren't interested in AF, there is no reason for a scale modeler to use hybrid trackage products.

Turnouts manufactured to S-scale NMRA standards are very reliable and look very good indeed. S-scale NMRA-standard flangeways, for example, are the same width as HO NMRA-standard flangeways. Therefore, because of S's larger scale ratio (36 percent larger than HO), S-scale turnouts actually look more realistic than HO turnouts.

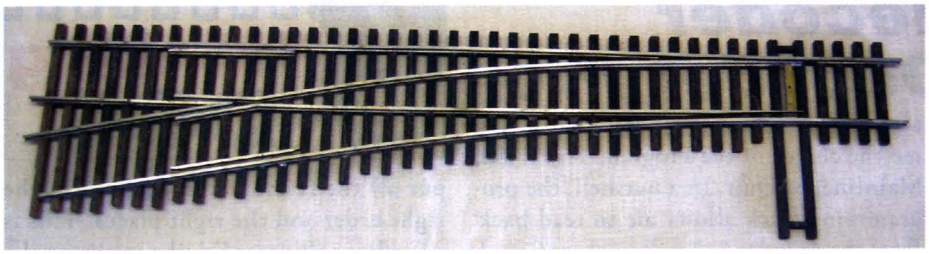
And don't worry about lack of scale equipment. S-scale standard gaugers have never had it so good. Because of the dominance of AF fans, the commercial reality is that S's major manufacturers – SHS, **S Scale America** (SSA), and **American Models** (AM) – produce lots of quality equipment, generally packaged for American Flyer trains and track. However, both SHS and SSA include scale NMRA-standard wheel sets in their rolling stock boxes. SHS packages replacement scale wheel sets with its diesel locomotives, and offers a specific scale version of its popular 2-8-0 steam locomotive. AM offers scale versions of all of its cars and locomotives. We S-scale modelers owe a lot to the large base of AF fans. Without them, our vendor community would be much smaller.

Next time we'll be talking about couplers. See you then!

—

Feel free to E-mail any comments or questions about S scale in general to: scurves@modelrailroadnews.com. Or write to: S-Curves, c/o Model Railroad News, P.O. Box 1080, Merlin, OR 97532-1080. Suggestions, contributions, and announcements are all welcome.

New York, Westchester & Boston Class P-3 No. 4523 passenger motor has just emerged from State Line Tunnel with the Boston-bound Grand Isle Limited. No. 4523 was scratchbuilt by the author. The catenary utilizes span wire assemblies, rain caps, and column bases from Model Memories; it is otherwise scratchbuilt. Track is hand-laid. Photograph by Dick Karnes.



Tomalco's S-scale standard-gauge Number 6 turnout is an example of the fine-quality NMRA-compatible track products available in S. Tomalco turnouts come mounted on laser-cut wood tie beds. On request, Tomalco will provide turnouts in "DCC-compatible" configuration: closure rails gapped, points grounded to adjacent stock rails, insulated throwbar. Tomalco photo.

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Managing a decoder with JMRI's Decoder Pro

BY JOHN SIPPLE — *This month I continue my plunge into* ***Decoder Pro****. This is a software application that is part of the* ***Java Model Railroad Interface*** *(JMRI), and that means it will work on specific Windows, Macintosh, and Linux computers using the Java computer language. Last month we discovered that we needed some sort of interface from your computer to one of a number of DCC command stations. This month we go further into JMRI's Decoder Pro and get a better look at how it works.*

One of my favorite locomotives is an **Atlas** GP40 that I've had for several years. Painted in Southern Pacific's "speed logo, bloody nose" livery, it's a lovely model, and as a runner, it's a real sweetie. It is smooth, quiet, and very reliable. It also has an engine/dynamic brake section that snaps off and lets me change decoders easily. It currently has a Lenz "Silver" decoder in it, a delicious pairing, making it the ideal test subject.

When I start Decoder Pro, the Preferences window pops up first, and I also get the opening window that offers me the choice of the Program Track, the Mainline, or Quit. In a nutshell, the programming track allows me to read back from the decoder, so I will go there first. I have both locations connected, one to the Program Track and the other to the Mainline, so Decoder Pro sends messages to the appropriate places, depending upon what you're doing. When I make this selection, up comes a new window that helps me to choose a decoder definition.

If I poke the [Ident] button on the screen, the system will try to read the decoder's address. It will then cryptically announce at the bottom, "7122 detected but not in the roster." Since that's true enough, I poke the other button, [Read type from decoder]. This reads the stored manufacturer and model codes in the computer and chases through the assortment of existing decoder types in the tall window, and in this case, found the Lenz Silver in the list. This isn't complete magic; someone took the trouble to shake down this decoder and put all the relevant information in the right order and the right places. This is a faceless volunteer I'd like to personally thank here in print.

As soon as I click on the suggested decoder, the [Open Programmer] button becomes active and I poke it. Another window opens over all that went before and I'm faced with my chance to give this loco a name (I have developed my own naming convention with up to four characters of roadname, a space, and the roadnumber.) In this case, we get SP 7122. Then comes an entry for the roadname followed by one for the roadnumber, but the entry name at the top is how it is displayed on the list. There are fields for note entry on both the loco and the decoder.

If you have checked "Comprehensive" in the application's preferences, you will see several tabs along the top of the screen. I would encourage you to browse these as you get to know the decoder. On these screens are the tools to manage the

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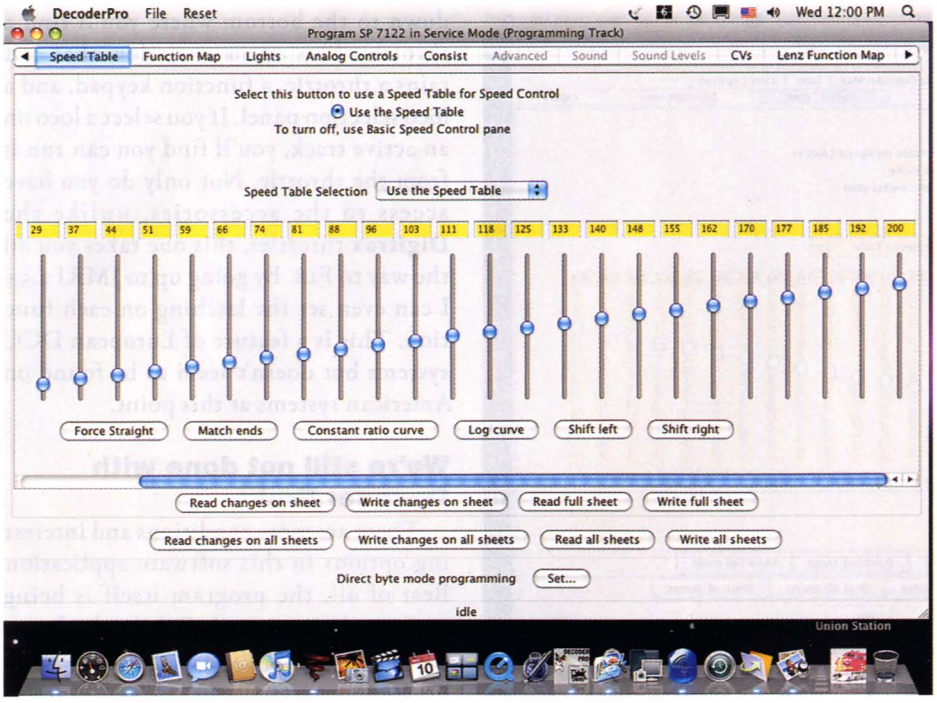


This is the Macintosh appearance for the Speed Table page. Due to its greater width, it extends off the window and so the side scroll bar is required. Both interfaces run on the Mac just fine, so only the appearance is changed.

entire decoder, including specialties of the decoder maker. If reading decoder manuals confuses you as to what you can do, a well-written decoder definition offers you control of everything.

Be careful of just writing willy-nilly; the numbers that go with each possible change are from the expected defaults, not necessarily what is actually in the decoder. There is a button at the bottom that offers to read the full page, and if there aren't a lot of elements to read, I'd go ahead and do that. Some things will change and others won't, but at least you'll know what you've got. From there, you can start to make decisions about changes.

Adding a four-digit address is what you do on the Basic Pane, along with turning DC operation on and off; I'd turn it off unless you absolutely need it. I put in the "7122" and then had Decoder Pro write that to the decoder, which took only seconds. The next pane is motor, and it is basically acceleration and deceleration, but other things may be there, too, including torque compensation, if a decoder has that. Once again, there is little enough on that page that I can use a "read-study-change-write-save" work ethic.

Then comes the "Speed Control" tab. If your decoder has it, here will be your start-mid-max speed settings. So far, nothing has been offered as a CV number; all of it is made up of either a box in which you enter your value or else a box-and-slider, all labeled in plain English. The slider is easy to drag, but if you want a specific number, there's a box for that, as well. On down the line is a complete listing of available CVs for this decoder, if you must. The Speed Control page is an alternate to the "Speed Table" page. Of considerable value is the button [Write changes only] since this is faster than writing the whole page.

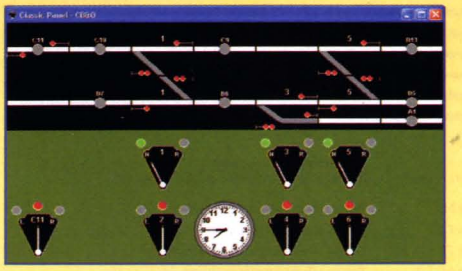
If you've always wanted to do speed tables but rued the programming involved, relax. The Speed Table Pane consists of 28 sliders you can move individually, rather like setting the graphic EQ on your sound system. There are also some choices below, some of which shape the controls into a curve one way or the other. You can also set the Step 28 to, say, 200, poke the [Match Ends] button, and get a straight line from 0 to 200. Once there, you can make some further tweaks.

Decoders with sound have their sound controls in a special pane for that. Best of all, there is an easy manner for dealing with "Indexed Programming." Some decoders use a series of two or three CVs to alter one thing, a situation I have found annoying until now. With Decoder Pro, you simply select the change you want with a slider or putting a value in a box, and the write function tends to the messy indexing.

Mainline Mode

One of our favorite tricks in programming is to set, say, CV2 with the loco on

1940 Union Switch and Signal Panel for DCC...



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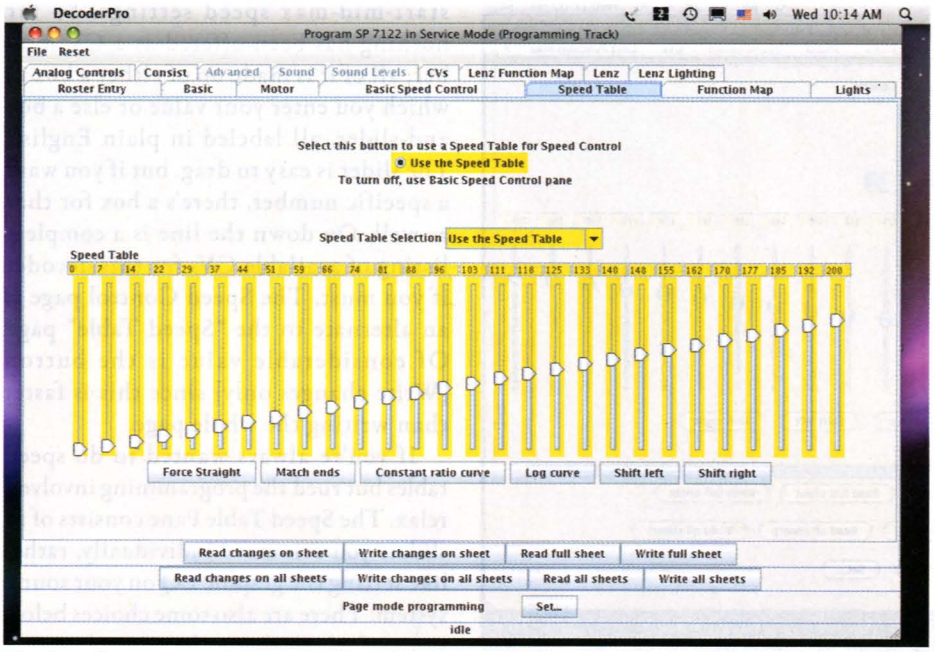
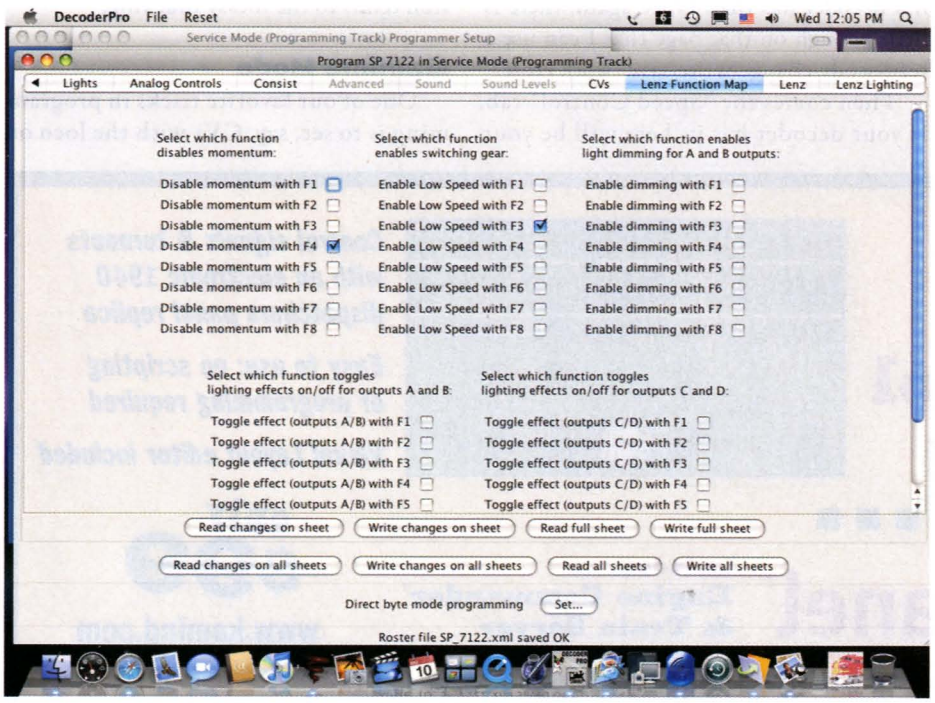

DecoderPro
Wed 10:14 AM
Program SP 7122 in Service Mode (Programming Track)
File Reset
Analog Controls Consist Advanced Sound Sound Levels CVs Lenz Function Map Lenz Lenz Lighting
Roster Entry Basic Motor Basic Speed Control Speed Table Function Map Lights
Select this button to use a Speed Table for Speed Control
Use the Speed Table
To turn off, use Basic Speed Control pane
Speed Table Selection Use the Speed Table
Speed Table
Force Straight
Match ends
Constant ratio curve
Log curve
Shift left
Shift right
Read changes on sheet
Write changes on sheet
Read full sheet
Write full sheet
Read changes on all sheets
Write changes on all sheets
Read all sheets
Write all sheets
Page mode programming
Set...
idle

The "Metal" appearance is more Windows-like. Note the difference in the tabs at the top of the window from the Mac version. The speed table controls are compressed more and fit on the screen. There are some other differences that show up, too. We'll get to them in the third installment.

the mainline and set to Speed Step 1. With every change of CV2, the loco goes faster or slower, or it starts at some point. You can do this with Decoder Pro, too. More complex changes such as a Speed Table change may require you to stop while you write your change. The ability to write to a decoder on the mainline and see the effective change is something between your system and the decoder; some do and some don't. You can always stop the loco, make the change, and start it up again, setting the throttle to the value you want.

What Mainline mode can't do is read decoders, so if you want to know what's in a decoder before you write over it, you'll need to read it using the Program Track. If software applications are a game to be learned and played, so is DCC in general, and this is just one of the rules of the game.

Another fun little bit of business can be found by going to the "Debug" menu and down to the bottom where you'll find a throttle. This opens a window that contains a throttle, a function keypad, and a loco selection panel. If you select a loco on an active track, you'll find you can run it from the throttle. Not only do you have access to the accessories, unlike the **Digitrax** throttles, this one takes you all the way to F28. By going up to JMRI 2.3.5, I can even set the latching on each function. This is a feature of European DCC systems but doesn't seem to be found on American systems at this point.


DecoderPro File Reset
Wed 12:05 PM
Service Mode (Programming Track) Programmer Setup
Program SP 7122 in Service Mode (Programming Track)
Lights Analog Controls Consist Advanced Sound Sound Levels CVs Lenz Function Map Lenz Lenz Lighting
Select which function disables momentum:
Select which function enables switching gear:
Select which function enables light dimming for A and B outputs:
Disable momentum with F1
Disable momentum with F2
Disable momentum with F3
Disable momentum with F4
Disable momentum with F5
Disable momentum with F6
Disable momentum with F7
Disable momentum with F8
Enable Low Speed with F1
Enable Low Speed with F2
Enable Low Speed with F3
Enable Low Speed with F4
Enable Low Speed with F5
Enable Low Speed with F6
Enable Low Speed with F7
Enable Low Speed with F8
Enable dimming with F1
Enable dimming with F2
Enable dimming with F3
Enable dimming with F4
Enable dimming with F5
Enable dimming with F6
Enable dimming with F7
Enable dimming with F8
Select which function toggles lighting effects on/off for outputs A and B:
Select which function toggles lighting effects on/off for outputs C and D:
Toggle effect (outputs A/B) with F1
Toggle effect (outputs A/B) with F2
Toggle effect (outputs A/B) with F3
Toggle effect (outputs A/B) with F4
Toggle effect (outputs A/B) with F5
Toggle effect (outputs C/D) with F1
Toggle effect (outputs C/D) with F2
Toggle effect (outputs C/D) with F3
Toggle effect (outputs C/D) with F4
Toggle effect (outputs C/D) with F5
Read changes on sheet
Write changes on sheet
Read full sheet
Write full sheet
Read changes on all sheets
Write changes on all sheets
Read all sheets
Write all sheets
Direct byte mode programming
Set...
Roster file SP_7122.xml saved OK

This is the Lenz Function Map page, and you'll notice how easy it is to simply check what you want and then poke the [Write changes on sheet] button. Sure beats plugging all those number into my throttle. Hundreds of volunteers work to enter the decoder descriptions and double check them.

We're still not done with Decoder Pro!

There are more conditions and interesting options in this software application. Best of all, the program itself is being constantly improved. While the latest production release is Version 2.0, there are programmer versions up to V2.3.7 as of this writing. The newbie is well advised to get started with V2.2 while they get their "sea legs" and make sure the software-hardware connection is good.

Because this is not a commercial software release, it doesn't have the ruthless slicking-up and bug-hunting that a for-profit product might enjoy. Still, this is a mighty step in the right direction and the price is certainly right! If you wanted to just walk into a store and get everything you need in a single box, this isn't it, and there really is nothing on the market that is. The problem is with the plethora of DCC systems out there and the variety of connections and protocols required, not to mention the many flavors of computers. It should be stated that some DCC systems simply don't support computer connection, and if you have one of them, you're outside, looking in.

The next time we get together with Decoder Pro in this space, we'll talk about some of the problems and issues I've encountered. For some, there are workarounds; for others, it's something else entirely. We'll also get to enjoy some of the advantages, too. See you there.

Java Model Railroad Interface, http://jmri.sourceforge.net/

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If you have questions, answers, suggestions, tips, or comments about DCC and the topic in this column, e-mail me at: dcc@modelrailroadnews.com or send a letter to: DCC, c/o Model Railroad News, P.O. Box 1080, Merlin, OR 97532-1080

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A Different TAMR Voice

Hi folks, I just wanted to add a quick note introducing our writer for this month's TAMR column. No, this space is not solely dedicated to letting me blab on each month, this is supposed to be the voice of younger model railroaders. I've reminded and bugged my fellow TAMR members about this for pretty much my entire presidential tenure, and finally, a member has responded and worked through the process of getting an article written for MRN!

Sawyer Berry joined the TAMR about a year ago and started sharing his railroading progress and ideas in the TAMR Hotbox newsletter. I applauded his early effort and enthusiasm, as that is the same approach I took to joining the TAMR, and I feel that jumping in and getting involved is always the best approach to a new group. Now, you can enjoy Sawyer's nifty article on a railroading idea that I've often thought about, but never quite gotten good enough at to bring up on my monthly soapbox rants here. I hope we will hear more from TAMR members like Sawyer in the future. — Steven Goehring

Creating a History for your Freelanced Railroad

BY SAWYER BERRY — If you're a freelancer like me, you probably know how annoying it is to create a history for your roadname, but at the same time how fun it is. And if you can't get it to sound just right, read this article, and maybe you can get some ideas for your history. There was an article in *Great Model Railroads 2009* about creating a history, and that article made me want to create a history for my railroad, so here's my experience of creating my history for the Aiken-Augusta Terminal Railway.

The best first question to get you started is what you answer when you first decide to freelance, which is what level of freelancing are you going to: Are you bringing back another railroad's old lines, creating a fictional branch of a railroad, merging lines, replacing one railroad with another? Or are you doing a complete freelance? Before this though, you should know the basic locale you'll be modeling. I'm doing the complete freelance because it gives me complete and total freedom to use or do whatever I want on my railroad. However, I did use three real-world facts:

1) Both Norfolk Southern and CSX have yards in Augusta

2) There is rail activity in Aiken

3) Norfolk Southern operates between Aiken and Augusta

However, I added many more fictional facts, and I'm not so much "taking over" Norfolk Southern's line between Aiken and Augusta as just plain pretending it ever existed and making my own double-track main. I'm also adding tons of traffic (literally) that isn't real. There's also another freelanced RR, the South Carolina Central, in Aiken, and its existence is explained in my history.

How your railroad began is a good question to start really getting your history in shape. It could have started back in the 1800s, or been formed by a merger, or, as I chose, it could have come from another road going out of business, among other ways. Then you need to decide on your roster; after that, figure which industries you'll serve with it. And then, interesting facts should be added onto the end or thrown into the middle or beginning or wherever. By piecing those answers together, I came up with this:

AAT Rwy GP35 #1306 and ex-ATSF (now AAT) U23B #6330 enjoy a brief rest in the local engine house on Aiken Branch #2.

The Aiken-Augusta Terminal Railroad Official History

The Aiken-Augusta Terminal Railway (AAT) was formed on March 31st, 1992, when local Aiken businessman Sawyer Berry purchased the section of the Savannah River Railroad (which had gone bankrupt that January, and was being auctioned off) that ran between Aiken, SC, and Augusta, GA, as well as the two branch lines on that portion. Unknown to others, he had a backing of wealthy investors and about a dozen new industries ready to come online for two new branch lines to be built. With this knowledge, Berry took advantage of the auction to get enough locomotives for his plans. The roster he picked up was as follows: 4 EMD SD40s and 2 EMD SD35s for his mainline trains, and 3 GE U23Bs, 2 EMD GP38s, 3 EMD GP35s, 7 EMD GP9s, 1 EMD GP7, and 1 repowered F-M H-15-44 for running the branch lines, yard switching, and any other odd jobs. All locomotives that hadn't already been patched from other road's paint schemes were repainted, and the patch jobs were repatched. He also purchased 90 percent of the SRR's freight car fleet (around 200 cars) for a leasing division and an ex-Southern High Hood GP38-2 to work the leasing yard and run trains of cars to either the Aiken or Augusta yards.

Operation began that July, and so did the construction of the branch lines, which began running in 1998. Management will initiate an upgrade plan come May 2009, where the entire track system will be upgraded, and all the GP9s, as well as the GP7 and H-15-44 will be repowered under EMD's 710ECO repower program. They will all, however, retain their high hoods. This is projected to be finished by December 2009. MP15DCs will be leased while these units are away.

As you can see, the basic history is quite easy to create after answering a few simple questions and then letting your imagination run free. You can construct your roster around your favorite locomotives too. After you have your basic histories, you can create little "mini-histories" for your locomotives and/or branch lines, or anything else, for that matter. Here are two examples, both of locomotives:

U23B #6330

Purchased by the SRR in 1986 to replace a U23B that was terribly damaged in a crash, U23B #6330 is a former ATSF locomotive. Retaining her original number and paint, with only the letters AAT in black on the back of the long hood and in white above the Santa Fe lettering on the long hood, this U23B is called the "Beast." She got this nickname because in 1987, she hauled a 40-car train from Charleston to Anderson, about up the whole state of South Carolina, with only an H-15-44 that was rebuilt for fuel economy, not horsepower (rated at 900 hp). It currently runs a morning freight out to Aiken branch #2 from the Aiken yard, and then an evening freight back to the Aiken yard form the branch.

H-15-44 #8

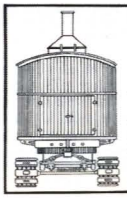
Built in 1949 for the Savannah River railroad, H-15-44 #8 is the last of her kind and is almost 50 years old. Originally assigned to a branch line in the upstate, she was repowered in 1976, and in 1987, she helped U23B #6330 haul its famous freight. Her nickname is the "Southern Belle" because of her age and her old F-M styling. She is currently the yard switcher for Aiken Branch #1.

You can intertwine histories, like I did for the two above locomotives, and give your history just a little more intrigue.

Well, there's my story, and I hope that it will either help you over a road block in your mind, or just plain motivate you to create your own history. It can be a very rewarding experience.

—

If you have any questions, comments, tips, or suggestions concerning this column or model railroading in general, send them to: The Future of Model Railroading, c/o Model Railroad News, P.O. Box 1080, Merlin, OR 97532-1080 or e-mail to: tamr@modelrailroadnews.com.



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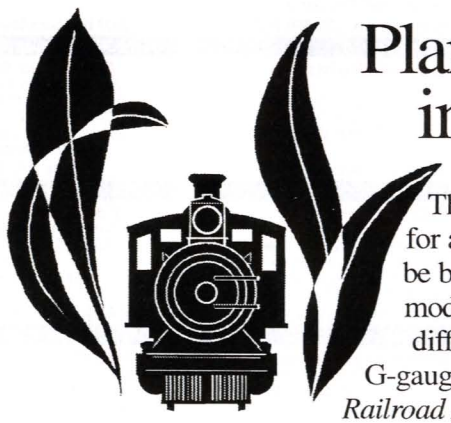

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HO CUSTOM PTD cars, locos; RR DVDs, magazines, decals. Fred Cesefske, 4049 Pine Grove Ave., Ft Gratiot, MI 48059.

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MODELING NY CITY SUBWAY? Write Mark Ray 89T4638, LCF Box 91, Sonyea, NY 14556 to share ops, data/ideas.

HO FOR SALE: New, TRO, Athearn Genesis UP #3985 Challenger WS, $200. Call Bob Clifford, (215) 639-7190.

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EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

Events for the April 2009 issue must be received by February 13th, 2009

Attn. Clubs & Show Sponsors — Place your FREE event announcement in front of thousands of readers! Let them know about your special event! Send your announcement to us at least three months prior to the event for maximum coverage. Write to: Events, c/o Model Railroad News, P.O. Box 1080, Merlin, OR 97532-1080. You can fax us your event at: (541) 955-0346; or e-mail: events@modelrailroadnews.com

Free trial subscription cards of Model Railroad News are available upon request for show and meet attendees. Call, fax, or e-mail for details.

Events & Activities can be viewed online at www.ModelRailroadNews.com

Alabama, Birmingham — The Smokey City Rails Model Railroad Club will be hosting its 18th Spring Train Show and Sale on February 28th, at the First Baptist Church of Zion City, 1104 Gene Reed Road. Hours will be from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Admission: $5.00, adults; $2.00, children 8-12 years old; younger than 8 admitted free. For more information, contact: Smokey City Rails Model Railroad Club, P.O. Box 94606, Birmingham, AL 35220; Sonny Burchfield, (205) 980-0611 between 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. Central Standard Time only; e-mail: scrmrrc@aol.com; please put "Show" or "SCR" in the subject line.

Alabama, Fairhope — Fairhope's Seventeenth Annual Model Train Show will be held on March 21st & 22nd, at Fairhope Kindergarten Center, 100 S. Church Street. Hours will be from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Saturday, and from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Sunday. This train show is held in conjunction with the annual Fairhope Arts & Crafts Show. Attractions to include a contest for the oldest accompanied child. The winner was 61 in 2008. Admission: $2.00, adults; accompanied children admitted free (no age restriction); active duty military, police, and fire fighters admitted free. For more information, contact: Herb Kern, 6405 Magnolia Place Ct. S., Mobile, AL 36695; (251) 660-1659; e-mail: dxlndkern@aol.com

Arizona, Phoenix — The Arizona Division/PSR/NMRA Spring Division Meet will be held on March 7th, at the First Southern Baptist Church, 3100 W Camelback. Hours will be from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Admission: $7.00, members; $3.00, under 21; free if joining NMRA/PSR at registration. For more information, contact: Art Carlton, 1898 S. Private Drive, Casa Grande, AZ, 85294; (520) 723-9212.

Arkansas, Bentonville — The Sugar Creek Model Railroad and Historical Society's Sixth Annual Great NWA Model Train & Historical Memorabilia Show will be held on February 28th, at the Clarion Hotel and Convention Center, 211 SE Walton Blvd. Hours will be from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Admission: $5.00, adults; children 12 and under admitted free. For more information, contact: Bill Wright, P.O. Box 3113, Bella Vista, AR 72715; (479) 426-1544; e-mail: w5mth73@cox.net

California, Bakersfield — The Golden Empire Historical & Modeling Society will be holding a Model Train show on March 14th & 15th, at Kern County Fairgrounds, 1142 South P Street. Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Saturday, and from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Sunday. Attractions to include over 100 vendor tables, thousands of square feet of model train layouts, and Live Steam Train Rides. Admission: $6.00, adults; ages 12 & under admitted free when accompanied by paying adult; admission good for both days. For more information, contact: Doug Wagner, 14008 Tierra Blanca Ave., Bakersfield, CA 93314; (661) 331-6695; e-mail: carldw@aol.com

California, Indio — The Coachella Valley Model Railroaders will be at the Riverside County Fair National Date Festival on February 13-22, in the Home Arts Building, at 82-503 Highway 111. Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. all ten days. Attractions will include their fully scenic HO Scale layout with over 2,500 feet of track, and over 500 feet HOn3 layout operating with DCC. There is an admission fee to the fair, but their display is free. For more information, contact: Jim Hundley, (760) 347-6218; e-mail: jim@cvmrr.com; visit: www.cvmrr.com or www.datefest.org

California, Indio — The Coachella Valley Model Railroaders will be hosting an Open House on March 14th, at the Riverside County Fair National Date Festival Fairgrounds, 82-503 Highway 111. Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Attractions will include their fully scenic HO Scale layout with over 2,500 feet of track, and over 500 feet HOn3 layout operating with DCC. Admission is free. Enter at Gate 1 in front of the fairgrounds and follow the signs. For more information, contact: Jim Hundley, (760) 347-6218; e-mail: jim@cvmrr.com; visit: www.cvmrr.com

California, Riverside — The Roundhouse Gang Model RR Club will be holding a Swap Meet on February 28th, at the Janet Groeske Senior Center, 5257 Sierra Street (1 block north of Sears.) Hours will be from 7:30 a.m. to 12:00 noon. Admission: $3.00; spouse and under 18 admitted free. For more information, contact: Gary, (909) 794-3153; e-mail: gwintergerst@verizon.net

Colorado, Lakewood — The Foothills Society of Model Railroaders' Model Railroad and Toy Train Swap Meet will be held on March 21st, at Christ on the Mountain Church, 13922 W. Utah Avenue. Meet hours will be from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon. Admission: $3.00, adults; $1.50, over 64 or under 12. For more information, call George, (303) 989-0087; or Eric, (303) 985-1491.

Connecticut, Wallingford — Classic Shows, LLC will be holding a train and toy show on February 8th, at Zandri's Stillwood Inn, 1074 South Colony Road, U.S. Route 5, exit 13 on Interstate 91. Hours will be from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Admission: $5.00, children 12 and under admitted free with adult. For more information, contact: Classic Shows, LLC, P.O. Box 2415, Shelton, CT 06484; (203) 926-1327; www.ClassicShowsLLC.com

Florida, Lake Wales — The Historic Lake Wales Society/Lake Wales Model Railroad Club will be sponsoring the 11th Annual Train Show & Swap Meet on February 7th, at Hardman Rec. Complex, located at Seminole and 3rd Streets. Hours will be from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Admission: $5.00, adults; children under 12 admitted free when accompanied by a paid adult. Parking is free. For more information, contact: Darrell Smith, 1145 Sand Mountain Rd., Fort Meade, FL 33841; (863) 559-3160; or Jennifer, (863) 678-4209.

Florida, Palmetto — The Sarasota Model Railroad Club's Orange Blossom Special Show will be held on February 21-22, at Manatee Civic Center, 1 Haben Blvd. Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Saturday, and from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. on Sunday. Attractions to include 100 sales tables, HO modular layout, "C.O.M.E.T." — their "Hands On Railroad," along with Make and Take, and T-Trak assembly classes. Admission: $7.00, adults; children admitted free with paid adult. Bring a copy of this ad and receive $1.00 off adult admission. For more information, call: Dan Cioffi, (941) 758-3602.

Florida, Palmetto — The Western Division of the Sunshine Region of the NMRA will be holding its Winter 2009 Meeting on February 21st, at the Manatee Civic and Convention Center, 1 Haben Blvd. Hours will be from 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Admission: $10.00. For more information, contact: Gilbert Thomas, Jr., 4840 Williamstown Blvd., Lakeland, FL 33801; (863) 412-3090; e-mail: Thomas_12399@msn.com

Florida, Pinellas Park — Regal Railways will be sponsoring a Train Show to be held on February 28th, at the Knights of Columbus Hall, 7177 58th Street North. Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Attractions to include small operating layout, and vendors. Admission: $4.00, adults; children under 13 admitted free. For more information, contact: Joe Schramm, 1424 Regal Road, Clearwater, FL 33756; (727) 244-1341.

Georgia, Pine Mountain — Narrow Gauge Railway Day will be held on February 7th, at Callaway Gardens, 17800 U.S. Highway 27. Show will be begin at 8:00 a.m. Admission: registration in advance, $12.00; day of, $15.00. For more information, visit: www.themontgomerys.info/narrowgaugemeet/Welcome.html

Illinois, Arlington Heights — The Chicago O Scale Meet will be held March 20-22, at the Sheraton Chicago Northwest Hotel, 3400 West Euclid Avenue. Show hours for the public will be from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Saturday, and from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. on Sunday. Attractions will include the opportunity to buy, sell, and trade; clinics, discussion groups, layout tours, and a model contest. Admission: $20.00 for the weekend. For more information, call: Judy, (847) 401-4333; or visit: www.marchmeet.net

Illinois, Wheaton — The Great Midwest Train Show will be held on February 8th, at the DuPage County Fairgrounds, 2015 W. Manchester Road. Show hours will be from 9:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Admission: $7.00, adults; children under 12 admitted free. For more information, contact: Great Midwest Train Show, P.O. Box 34, Elmhurst, IL 60126; (630) 290-1962; fax: (240) 597-4482; www.greatmidwesttrainshow.com

Indiana, Crown Point — The Crown Point Model Railroad Show and Swap Meet will be held on March 29th, at St. Matthias Church Hall, 101 Burrell Drive. Hours will be from 10:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Admission: $3.00, adults; $1.00, children. For more information, call Tom, (219) 663-4480; or Bruno, (219) 663-0666.

Indiana, Fort Wayne — The Maumee Valley Railroad Club will be sponsoring a Model Railroad Show and Swap on February 28th, at Coliseum Bingo, 911 W. Washington Center Road. Hours will be from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Attractions to include operating layouts, hands on trains display, and play area. Site will have refreshments, free parking, and is handicap accessible. Admission: $3.00, adults; $5.00, families; children under 12 admitted free. For more information, contact: Maumee Valley Railroad Club, P.O. Box 162, Leo, IN 46765; or Chuck White, (260) 760-1666; e-mail: Railcarman@verizon.net

Indiana, Indianapolis — The Naptown and White River Model Railroad Club will be presenting a Model Railroad Train Show and Open House on March 7th, at the Manual High School Gymnasium, 2405 S. Madison Avenue. Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Admission: $5.00, adults; children under 6 admitted free. Attractions to include operating layouts, clinics, and tours of the Club's Clubhouse, a mile from the show. For more information, call: Steve Handly, Club President, (317) 786-8627; or visit: www.naptownrr.org

Indiana, Nappanee — The Elkhart Model Railroad Club will be having their Annual Show and Sale on March 14th, at Borkholder Dutch Village, located 1/2 mile north of U.S. Highway 6 on Tomahawk Trail (CR 101). Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Attractions to include operating layouts, video presentations, door prizes, and railroad products in all scales. Admission: $4.00, adults; 12 and under admitted free with paid adult admission. For more information, contact: Paul Ewing, (574) 287-0908; e-mail: emrcc@yahoo.com; or visit the club web site at: www.trainweb.org/ew

Indiana, South Bend —Saint Joe Valley Model Railroad Club's Show and Sale will be held on March 15th, at South Bend Elks Lodge, 3535 E. McKinley Avenue. Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Attractions to include operating layouts, including LEGO model railroad, seminars, and refreshments on site. Admission: $4.00, individuals; $8.00, family. For more information, contact: Mr. David Korkhouse, P.O. Box 6591, South Bend, IN 46660; (574) 272-6436; www.sjvrr.com

Kansas, Lawrence — The Lawrence Model Railroad Club's Model Railroad Show & Swap Meet will be held on February 21st, at the Douglas County Fairgrounds Building 21, located at 2120 Harper Street. Hours will be from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Attractions will include door prizes, a modeling contest, and operating club train layouts in HO- and N-scale. Admission: $5.00, adults; children 12 and under admitted free with an adult. $1.00 off admission with the donation of a canned food item, which will be donated to the L.I.N.K. food pantry. For more information, contact: LMRC, 255 N. Michigan #5-25, Lawrence, KS 66044; e-mail: jimforegolf@hotmail.com

Kentucky, Greenup (Argillite) — The Collis P. Huntington Chapter NRHS will be holding their 26th Annual Tri-State Railroad Days on March 21- 22, at Kentucky Park's Greenbo Lake State Resort Park, just off of Kentucky Route 1 (near I-64). Hours will be from 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. on Saturday, and from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Sunday. Attractions will include a minimum of 8 operating layouts of more that 1700 sq. ft., 75 dealer tables, day-long showing of railroad videos, a 7-1/2 inch gauge live steam, and a diesel railroad offering free rides to kids of all ages. A full-service restaurant and a snack wagon will be available. Admission and parking are free; donations greatly appreciated. For more information, contact: Dale Smith, 2302 N. Second St., Ironton, OH 45638; (740) 532-6102; e-mail: conan56@sbcglobal.net

Maine, Augusta — The Whitefield Lions Club's 22nd Annual Winter Model Railroad and Miniature Show will be held on February 14th, at the National Guard Armory, located on Western Avenue. Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Attractions to include operating layouts, miniature displays, and 100 dealer tables. Site is handicapped accessible. Admission: $4.00, adults; children under 12 admitted free; $9.00, family. For more information, contact: Steven P. Laundrie, 50 Fairview Ave., Randolph, ME 04346; (207) 582-1410.

Maryland, Arcadia — The Maryland Steam Historical Society's Third Annual Train Show will be held on March 7th, on the show grounds of the Arcadia Fire Company. Hours will be from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Admission: $3.00, adults; children under 12 admitted free. For more information, contact: (410) 374-1332; or visit: www.marylandsteam.org

Maryland, Timonium — The "Great Scale Model Train Show" plus the "Hi-Rail & Collectors Train Show" will be held January 31– February 1, at the Maryland State Fairgrounds, 2200 York Road. Show hours will be from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Saturday, and from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Sunday. Attractions will include 25,000 square feet of beautifully detailed display layouts in all scales; free train movies; clinics and demonstrations; and over 800 tables of model trains, equipment, and related items for sale. Refreshments will be available; parking is free. Admission: $9.00, adults; children under 15 admitted free; $18.00, family. Good for both days. For more information, contact: Howard Zane, 5236 Thunder Hill Road, Columbia, MD 21045; (410) 730-1036; e-mail: hzane1@comcast.net; www.gsmts.com

Massachusetts, Hingham — The South Shore Model Railway Club's Spring Open House and Show will be held March 21 -22, at Bare Cove Park, Building 51, located at 19 Fort Hill Street. Hours will be from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Saturday, and from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Sunday. Saturday attractions to include viewing the club layout, how-to clinics, rail movies, and dealer tables. The activities at the Train Club will also be held on Sunday in conjunction with the new dealers and additional train layouts located at the South Shore Country Club that are visiting on Sunday only. Food

service will be available both days from 11:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at the Country Club. Admission: $5.00, adults; $2.00, seniors (65+) and children 6-12 with an adult; children 5 and under admitted free. For more information, contact: The South Shore Model Railway Club, P.O. Box 170, Hingham, MA 02043-0170; (781) 740-2000; fax: (781) 740-8900; e-mail: ssmrc@verizon.net; visit: www.ssmrc.org

Massachusetts, Mansfield — Mystic Valley Railway Society's "Rail-A-Rama XLI" will be held on March 1st, at the Holiday Inn-Mansfield, 31 Hampshire Street, near the intersection of 95 and 495. Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Attractions will include many operating displays, children's U-RUN toy trains, a multi-tier video theatre, and free parking. A complete snack bar or Sunday Brunch will be available. Admission: $5.00, adults; $1.00, children 5-12; under 5 admitted free. For more information, contact: Russ Rylko, P.O. Box 365486, Hyde Park, MA 02136; (617) 361-4445; www.mysticvalleyrs.org

Massachusetts, Taunton — The NMRA HUB Division will be holding its Spring Training event on March 7th, at the Holiday Inn, 700 Myles Standish Boulevard. Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Admission: $5.00, adults; under 14 admitted free. Attractions to include clinics, dealer tables, and layouts. Featured clinician will be Allan McClelland. For more information, contact: Peter Watson, (508) 378-3582; e-mail: Spingtraining@hubdiv.org

Massachusetts, Wilmington — A Greenberg Train & Toy Show will be held March 28-29, at Shriners Auditorium, 99 Fordham Road. Show hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. both days. Show will feature a huge marketplace of train, toy, and hobby dealers, operating model railroads, and instructional presentations. Admission: $7.00, adults good for both days; children under 12 admitted free. For more information, contact: Greenberg Shows, P.O. Box 34, Elmhurst, IL 60126; (630) 279-4087; e-mail: Staff@Greenbergshows.com; www.greenbergshows.com

Missouri, Joplin — The Joplin Museum Complex will be hosting a Model Railroad Show and Swap Meet on March 28th, at 7th and Schifferdecker Streets in Schifferdecker Park between the golf course and swimming pool. Hours will be from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Attractions to include several operating train layouts, over 60 tables of items for sale or trade from scale model trains, collectable antique electric trains, and train collectables. Admission: $3.00, adults; 12 and under admitted free. All proceeds at the door go to benefit the Joplin Museum Complex. For more information, contact: Rick Gardner, (417) 673-4888; e-mail: rickgardner@sofnet.com; or visit: www.tristatemodelrailroaders.com

Missouri, Saint Louis — The Boeing Employees' Railroad Club will be having a Railroad Swap Meet on March 14th, at the Greensfelder Recreation Complex, located at Queeny Park, 550 Wiedman Road. Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Admission: $3.00, adults; children under 12 admitted free. For more information, contact: Wayne Schimmel, 733 Hwy. Y, Winfield, MO 63389; (636) 668-6313 after 6:30 p.m. CT; e-mail: wwhtehrse@aol.com

Minnesota, Hutchinson — Luce Line Railroad Club will be hosting their Spring Railfest on March 28th, at the Hutchinson Mall, 1060 State Hwy. 15 S. Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Attractions to include operating model railroads in several scales, a flea market of new and used model railroad equipment, railroad books, videos, and memorabilia; and lunch on site. Admission is free. For more information, contact: Terry Davis, (320) 587-7820; e-mail: ptdavis@hutchtel.net

New Jersey, Edison — A Greenberg Train & Toy Show will be held March 14-15, at the New Jersey Convention & Expo Center, 97 Sunfield Avenue. Show hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. both days. Show will feature a huge marketplace of train, toy, and hobby dealers, operating model railroads, and instructional presentations. Admission: $7.00, adults good for both days; children under 12 admitted free. For more information, contact: Greenberg Shows, P.O. Box 34, Elmhurst, IL 60126; (630) 279-4087; e-mail: Staff@Greenbergshows.com; www.greenbergshows.com

New York, Hornell — The Hornell Model Railroad Club will be holding its Annual Show and Open House on February 7-8, in the Hornell, NY Courthouse basement (next to Friendly's Restaurant). Hours will be from 1:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. both days. Admission is free. For more information, call Louis K. Greiff, (607) 587-8372; or e-mail: louie113@frontiernet.net

New York, Middletown — A Greenberg Train & Toy Show will be held February 14-15, at Orange County Fair Arena, 100 Carpenter Avenue. Show hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. both days. Show will feature a huge marketplace of train, toy, and hobby dealers, operating model railroads, and instructional presentations. Admission: $7.00, adults good for both days; children under 12 admitted free. For more information, contact: Greenberg Shows, P.O. Box 34, Elmhurst, IL 60126; (630) 279-4087; e-mail: Staff@Greenbergshows.com; www.greenbergshows.com

New York, Rochester — A Greenberg Train & Toy Show will be held February 21-22, at Monroe County Fair & Expo Center, 2695 East Henrietta Road. Show hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. both days. Show will feature a huge marketplace of train, toy, and hobby dealers, operating model railroads, and instructional presentations. Admission: $7.00, adults good for both days; children under 12 admitted free. For more information, contact: Greenberg Shows, P.O. Box 34, Elmhurst, IL 60126; (630) 279-4087; e-mail: Staff@Greenbergshows.com; www.greenbergshows.com

North Carolina, Greensboro — The Carolina Model Railroaders will be holding a Train Show and Swap Meet on March 14th, at the J. Douglas Galyon Depot (formerly southern Railway Station), 236-C East Washington Street. Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Attractions to include dealers, and the Club's operating N scale layout, and HO layout (under construction). Admission: $5.00, adults; children under 12 admitted free. For more information, contact: Bob Love, 5926 Firewood Trail, Greensboro, NC 27410; (336) 665-1517; e-mail: Boblove1@bellsouth.net or Ben Stemkowski, (336) 540-1543; e-mail: stemjobe@bellsouth.net

Ohio, Cleveland — The World's Greatest Hobby On Tour will be held March 14-15, at the IX Center. Show hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Saturday, and from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Sunday. Attractions will include entertainment, operation model layouts, manufacturers, and hobby shops. Admission: $10.00, adults; children under 16 admitted free; admission is good for both days. For more information, contact: World's Greatest Hobby On Tour, P.O. Box 11, Elmhurst, IL 60126; (630) 279-5094; fax: (630) 214-4113; www.wghshow.com

Ohio, Dalton — CJ Trains' Spring Greater Wayne County Train And Toy Show will be held on March 22nd, at Buckeye Event Center, 624 Henry Street. Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Attractions to include all gauges, running layouts, farm and antique toys, NASCAR items, videos, free parking, and refreshments will be available. Admission: $4.00, adults; children 12 and under admitted free. For more information, contact: Jon Ulbright, 941 Buchholz Drive, Wooster, OH 44691; (330) 262-7488 after 6:00 p.m.; e-mail: cathijon@sssnet.com; www.cjtrains.com

Ohio, Greenville — The Darke Co. Model Railroad Club Flea Market will be held on March 1st, in the Youth Building at the Darke Co. Fairgrounds, located on State Route 49. Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Admission: $3.00, adults; under 12 admitted free. For more information, contact: Sam Bashore, 528 Wayne Ave., Greenville, OH 45331; (937) 548-0059.

Oregon, Clackamas —The 24th Annual Willamette Model Railroad Club Swap Meet will be held on March 7th, at New Hope Church, 11731 SE Stevens Road. Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Attractions to include over 100 tables of sellers of all gauges, books, tapes, memorabilia, and accessories. Refreshments will be available on premises. Admission: $3.00, adults; children under 12 admitted free. For more information, contact: Rick Andrews, (503) 642-3298; e-mail: drdrews1@verizon.net

Pennsylvania, Allentown — ATMA Spring Thaw Train Meet will be held February 21-22, at the Agricultural Hall, Allentown Fairgrounds, located at 17th and Chew Streets. Hours will be from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Saturday, and from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. on Sunday. Attractions to include operating displays, switching layouts, and train races for children ages 12 and under. Admission: $6.00 per day for adults; children 12 and under admitted free. For more information, contact: ATMA, 1120 S. Jefferson St., Allentown, PA 18102; (610) 821-7886; www.allentowntrainmeet.com

Pennsylvania, Fenton — The Maryland Steam Historical Society's Third Annual Train Show will be held on March 7th, on the show grounds of the Arcadia Fire Company. Hours will be from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Admission: $3.00, adults; children under 12 admitted free. For more information, contact: (410) 374-1332; or visit: www.marylandsteam.org

Pennsylvania, Greensburg — A Greenberg Train & Toy Show will be held February 7-8, at Laurel Highlands Event Center, in the Westmoreland Crossing Mall Annex. Show hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. both days. Show will feature a huge marketplace of train, toy, and hobby dealers, operating model railroads, and instructional presentations. Admission: $7.00, adults good for both days; children under 12 admitted free. For more information, contact: Greenberg Shows, P.O. Box 34, Elmhurst, IL 60126; (630) 279-4087; e-mail: Staff@Greenbergshows.com; www.greenbergshows.com

Pennsylvania, Greensburg — Division 2, MCR-NMRA will be sponsoring Railroad Prototype Modelers Seminar – East on March 27-28, at the Sheraton Four Points Hotel, located on Route 30 East. Hours will be from 1:00 p.m. on Friday to 11:00 p.m. on Saturday. Registration will begin at 10:00 a.m. on Friday. For more information, contact: Dick Flock, 337 Elm Drive, Greensburg, PA 15601; (724) 850-8882; e-mail: jlerr337@verizon.net; www.greensburgpa4points.com

Pennsylvania, Richboro — The Abington Lines Model Railroad Club will be having Open House on Feb. 7-8, at 2066 Second Street Pike (PA Rt. 232). Hours will be from 12:00 noon to 4:00 p.m. Attractions will include multiple trains with digital radio control and sound, two track mainline exceeding 1,000 feet in length, extensive trolley operation, a circus, operating roundhouse, industrial switching areas, waterfront with rail car ferries, wilderness waterfall, and multiple buildings with exquisite interior detailing. Admission is free; raffle trains, donations appreciated. For more information, call the Club at (215) 598-7720; or visit: www.abingtonlines.org

Tennessee, Nashville — The World's Greatest Hobby On Tour will be held February 14-15, at the Nashville Convention Center. Show hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Saturday, and from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Sunday. Attractions will include entertainment, operation model layouts, manufacturers, and hobby shops. Admission: $10.00, adults; children under 16 admitted free; admission is good for both days. For more information, contact: World's Greatest Hobby On Tour, P.O. Box 11, Elmhurst, IL 60126; (630) 279-5094; fax, (630) 214-4133; www.wghshow.com

Texas, Longview — The Junction and East Texas Train Society (JETTS) will be sponsoring the Longview Model Train Show on March 28-29th, at the Fairgrounds Exhibit Building, located off Highway 31 on Jaycee Drive. Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Saturday, and from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Sunday. Attractions will include modular layouts, dealer displays, a flea market, and videos. Admission: $7.00, adults; children under 12 admitted free. For more information, contact: Homer Fleischer, J.E.T.T.S., P.O. Box 6704, Longview, TX 75608; (903) 753-9512.

Texas, San Antonio — The World's Greatest Hobby On Tour will be held February 21-22, at the San Antonio Convention Center. Show hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Saturday, and from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Sunday. Attractions will include entertainment, operation model layouts, manufacturers, and hobby shops. Admission: $10.00, adults; children under 16 admitted free; admission is good for both days. For more information, contact: World's Greatest Hobby On Tour, P.O. Box 11, Elmhurst, IL 60126; (630) 279-5094; fax, (630) 214-4133; www.wghshow.com

Utah, Ogden — The Hostlers 20th Annual Model Railroad Festival will be held March 6-8, at the Ogden Union Station, located at 25th Street and Wall Avenue. Hours will be from 4:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. on Friday; from 9:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Saturday, and from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Sunday. Admission: $5.00, adults; children 12 and under admitted free. For more information, contact: Mike Murphy, (801) 394-4952; or John Grubb, (801) 476-9351; or visit: www.hostlers.info

Vermont, Essex Junction — The Northwestern Vermont Model Railroad Association will be hosting Vermont's largest Model Train Show on March 21st, at the Champlain Valley Exposition. Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. The show will be featuring multiple operating HO, N, G, and O-scale layouts, over 120 tables of exhibits and vendors, and a raffle. Site has free parking, and refreshments will be available at site. Admission: $5.00, adults; $1.00, ages 6-12; under 6 admitted free. For more information, contact: Ron Piro, 6 Peacham Ln., Essex Junction, VT 05452; (802) 878-1135; e-mail: ronpiro@aol.com; www.nwvrailroad.org

Virginia, Fredericksburg — A Greenberg Train & Toy Show will be held March 21-22, at Fredericksburg Expo & Conference Center, 2371 Carl D. Silver Parkway. Show hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. both days. Show will feature a huge marketplace of train, toy, and hobby dealers, operating model railroads, and instructional presentations. Admission: $7.00, adults good for both days; children under 12 admitted free. For more information, contact: Greenberg Shows, P.O. Box 34, Elmhurst, IL 60126; (630) 279-4087; e-mail: Staff@Greenbergshows.com; www.greenbergshows.com

Virginia, Virginia Beach — A Greenberg Train & Toy Show will be held February 28-March 1, at Virginia Beach Convention Center, 1000 19th Street. Show hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. both days. Show will feature a huge marketplace of train, toy, and hobby dealers, operating model railroads, and instructional presentations. Admission: $7.00, adults good for both days; children under 12 admitted free. For more information, contact: Greenberg Shows, P.O. Box 34, Elmhurst, IL 60126; (630) 279-4087; e-mail: Staff@Greenbergshows.com; www.greenbergshows.com

Washington, Monroe — The United Northwest Model Railroad Club will be hosting its 18th Annual Model Railroad Show to benefit the Snohomish County 4H on January 31st – February 1st, at Evergreen State Fairgrounds, 14405 179th Avenue SE. Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Saturday, and from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Sunday. Admission by donation: $7.00, adults; $5.00, seniors, and juniors 10-18; children 9 and under admitted free. For more information, e-mail: swaptables@unwclub.org

Wisconsin, Green Bay — N.E.W. Hobby's 23rd Annual Toy and Train Show will be held on March 1st, at Van Veghels Auction Complex, 2050 Profit Place. Hours will be from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Attractions to include old, and new collectable toys and trains of all scales. Refreshments will be available. For more information, call Jack Bacovsky, (920) 494-2216.

MRN: A Year in Review

As a courtesy to our readers, we have compiled an index featuring every product reviewed in the pages of MRN over the past year. We hope you find it useful.

January 2009

Project DCC, Part 7A Signal System Wiring
Special Report: Kader Buys Sada Kan
Athearn (N) F45/FP45 Diesel Locomotive & (HO) Checker Cab
Faller (N) Animated Car System
Grand River Models (S) Greg's Grocery Kit
MRC (DCC) 1820 Sound Decoder for Athearn RS3 Locomotive
MTH (HO) NYC 4-8-2 *Mohawk* & (O) CA-1 Caboose
Signature Press (Book) *Southern Pacific Freight Cars, Vol 5*
Walthers (HO) *Hiawatha* Diner and Tap Lounge & RS-2/RSC-2

December 2008

Aristo-Craft (1:29) 40-Foot Boxcars
Athearn (N) Ford C Rescue Trucks, (HO) CSX & Santa Fe Train Sets, (HO) F-7A/B Diesel Locomotive
Atlas (N) Trainman Train Set
Atlas O (O) Industrial Rail Starter Set
Bachmann (Track) E-Z Command DCC Turnouts
Blair Lines (HO) *Pizzaland* Kit
MTH (HO) Railking Scale Diesel Starter Set
Steamscenes (Calendars) 2009 Railroad Themed Calendars
Piko (HO) ICE-3 Train Set
Tokyo Marui (Z) Night Train Set

November 2008

Project DC, Part 6: Turnout Control Wiring
Athearn, Kato & Walthers (HO) Intermodal Cars
Atlas O (O) Master Line, Train Man & Industrial Rail Freight Car Roundup
Bachmann (Fn3) Boxcar
Charles Smiley (Video) *Key System Scrapbook*
Con-Cor (HO) Union Pacific M-10000
GC Laser (N & HO) Utility Truck Toolbox Kit
Granite Creek (On3) Logging Cars
Noch (HO) Shed/Kiosk Kit
Pine Canyon (S0 Professional Building Kit
Preiser (HO) Vegetable Wagon
Smoky Mountian (S) 41-foot Flat Car Kit
Train Control System (DCC & N) Decoder for "Classic N" Locomotives

October 2008

Special Coverage: MTH/MKT Trade Secret Lawsuit Settled
Project DCC Part 5: Track Assembly, Wiring, & Block Detection
Atlas (N) C420 Diesel Locomotive
Bachmann (HO) Peter Witt-Style Street Car
BVRR Specialties (Tool) Maxi-Grip Screw Starter
Grizzly Mountain Engineering (O) Farmers & Freight Wagons
Kadee (HO) Cushion Underframe Boxcars
Kato (N) Gunderson MAXI-IV Well Cars
Lionel (O) Legacy-Equipped FEF-3 Steam Locomotive
NCE (Electronics) DCC Wireless System
NSLC (Tool) Flamingo Glue
Oak Tree Systems (Electronics) SC-2 Servo Controller
Preiser (O) American Railroad Figures
Ye Olde Huff N Puff (On30) Freight Car Kits

September 2008

Special Coverage: NMRA 2008 National Train Show
Project DCC Part 4: Layout Configuration
Banta/Bachmann (On30) Boxcar Body Conversion Kit
Factory Direct Trains (HO) Trackmobile
Golden West Books (Book) *West Coast Interurbans-California*
Lionel (O) Legacy 990 Command Control System
MTH (HO) GS4 4-8-4 *Daylight* (O) Railking SW1 Diesel Locomotive
Red Caboose (HO) S-40-5 Stock Cars
Smokey Mountain Model Works (S) Ventilated Boxcars
Tomix (N) Freight and Fire Trucks
Wheels of Time (N) Harriman Passenger Cars
Woodland Scenics (O) Scenic Accent Figures

August 2008

Project DCC Part 3: DCC System Familiarization
Allen Keller (DVD) *Great Model Trains Vol. 58*
Aristo-Craft (1:24) C-16 Steam Locomotive
Bachmann (All Scales) DCC Control System, (Fn3) Tank Cars
Brass Trains (Book) *Brass Model Trains Price & Data Guide Vol. 1*
Broadway Limited (HO) Union Pacific Big Boy Steam Locomotive
Intermountain (N) SD45-2 Diesel Locomotive and Wood Deck Flat Car
Kato (N) Daylight Northern 4-8-4 GS 4 Steam Locomotive Set
MTH O) 19th Century Wood Coaches
Sidetrack Laser (HO) Cougar Ridge Lumber Co.
Siflor (All Scales) Landscaping Material
Walthers (HO) Proto 2000 Early EMD Road Switchers

July 2008

Special Coverage: How to Modify Your Old Roundhouse Box Cab
Project DCC Part 2
Athearn (HO) SD40-T Tunnel Motors
Bachmann (On30) Baldwin 4-4-0 American Steam Locomotive
Brass Guide (Book) *Brass Train Guide Book*
First Gear International (HO & O) TD25 Crawler
ESU/Loksound (All Scales) Sound Decoder with Railmaster Hobbies Ported Speakers
ICOM (N) TMC400 Motorcar, Park Set, Park Institution, and Bulldozer
Micro-Trains (N) 40-Foot Drop Bottom Gondola with Woodchip Extension
River Point Station (HO) F-350 Duallies
USA Trains (1:29) Fairmont Speeders

June 2008

Nuremberg International Toy Fair 2008
Project DCC Part 1
Aristo-Craft (1:29) Live Steam 2-8-2 Mikado Steam Locomotive
Athearn (HO) F-850 Flat Bed MOW Trucks
Atlas Trainman (N) Thrall 4759 Covered Hopper and Master Line (N) ACF 5701
Centerflow Plastics Hopper
Blair Line (HO) Gerald Depot Laser-Cut Kit
Broadway Limited (HO) Blueline RSD-14 "Alligator" Diesel Locomotive
Busch (HO) Summer Cottage Built-Up Structure
Castline (S) Auto-Thentic Pontiac Star Chief, Ford Crestliner & Mercury Sun Valley Autos
Charles Smiley (DVD) *Union Pacific Scrapbook*
Great Northern Book Publishing (BOOK) *BNSF Railway Freight Cars Vol 2.*
Marklin (Z) Commodore J1e Hudson Locomotive
Tangent Scale Models (HO) PS-2CD Hoppers
Walthers (N) Proto N GP18 Diesel Locomotive
Weaver Models (O) Head End RPO and Baggage Cars
Western Scale Models Blacksmith Shoppe Craftsman-style Structure Kit

May 2008

Special Report: 1:87 Vehicle Coverage from the 2008 International Toy Fair
American Ltd. Sand Towers and Fuel Cranes
Aristo-Craft (Large Scale) Rail Joiners Track Accessory
Athearn (HO) Genesis EMD MP15AC Switcher Standard DC & Sound DC/DCC
Atlas O (O) EMD F2/F3s 2-Rail and 3-Rail
Bachmann (1.20.3) Side-Door Gondola
CMW/Walthers (HO) GM PD 4103 Intercity Bus
Golden West Books (Book) *Piggyback and Containers: A History of Rail Intermodal on America's Steel Highway*
MNP/Bachmann/NCE (O) DCC-Powered Track Cleaning Car
Masterpiece (HO) 2007 Jeep Wrangler Unlimited
Micro-Trains (N) ACF Three Dome Tank Car
PrairieWorks (DVD) *SOO Line: From Michigan to Montana*
USA Trains (1:29) "Great Lakes" Ore Cars
Walthers (N) Cornerstone Injection-Molded Structure Kits, (HO) Hiawatha 52-Seat Coach and Express Car

April 2008

Aristo-Craft (1:29) GP40 Locomotive with QSI Sound
Athearn (N) Pre-weathered NACC 50-Foot Boxcars & (HO) John Deere Log Skidder
Atlas O (O) SD40 *Red Baron* Locomotive & Wood Express Reeder
BTS (O) Singer Watch Repair Kit
Bar Mills (HO) Tylick Tool Company Kit
BRAWA (HO) Pin-Socket Street Light
Blackstone Models (HO) D&RGW 3000 Series Boxcars
Broadway Limited (HO) Hybrid 4-6-4 New Haven I-5 Hudson
Charles Smiley (DVD) *Great Shortlines West*
MTH (HO) 2-8-8-8-2 Triplex Locomotive
Masterpiece (HO) 1936 Chrysler Airflow Imperial Eight
QSI Solutions (1:29) Plug-N-Play Aristo Sound Decoder

March 2008

Athearn (HO) Maxi I Well Car 5-Car Set with New Tooling
Atlas (N) ALCO C420 Diesel DC & DCC, (N & HO) 1978 Ford Fairmont Sedans, & (HO) Plastic Truss Bridge Kit
Bachman (Large Scale 1:20.3) K-27 *Mudhen* & 2-Bay Hopper
Banta Modelworks (O) Laser-Cut Gas Station Kit
C. Vision Productions (DVD) *Windy City Rails Vol. 3*
MTH (O) *RailKing Imperial* USRA 2-8-8-2 Mallet with ProtoSounds 2.0 and DCS Control
Kato (N) Yard Crew & UNITRAK Superelevated Track Set
Sidetrack Laser (HO) Classic Ice House Kit
Signature Press (Book) *Southern Pacific's Salt Lake Division*
Walthers (N) Proto Heritage DCC-Ready USRA 0-8-0 Yard Goat & (HO) *Hiawatha* Coach & Parlor Car
Woodland Scenics (N) 1950-Era Auto Scenes

February 2008

Aristo-Craft (Large Scale) Stainless Steel Wye Swiches
Athearn (N) PS-1 Boxcar and Mill Gonolas, (HO) SD40-2 Locomotive, (HO) John Deere 624J Wheel Loader & 770CH Motor Grader, (O) Ford Model As
Atlas O (O) Founder Series USRA 0-6-0 Steamer
Bachman (Large Scale) Flat Car
BLMA (N & HO) Modern Yard Office and Port-A-Potty
CMW (N & HO) 1950s-era Ford F-350 Pickup
Con-Cor (N) *Galloping Goose* Railbus
Great Northern Pacific Publications (Book) *Burlington Northern Railroad Cabooses 1970 - 1995*
San Juan (On30) D&RGW 3000 Series Boxcar, Short Caboose & High-Side Gondola
Scott Mason (DVD) *Building Craftsmans Structure Kits Vol. 3*
Sun Coast Models (O) Coaling Station
Woodland Scenics (N) Picket Line, Playtime, Campers, & Canoers & (Multi Scale) Trees
Walthers (HO) Proto200 Gondolas and Tank Cars

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- KEY - PRR T-1 4-4-4-4 1997 run (HO)
- TENSHODO - UP "Challenger" 4-6-6-4 1975 run (HO)
- TENSHODO - GN O-8 2-8-2 All new 1981 run (HO)
- TENSHODO - GN Q-1 2-10-2 1984 run- Last run (HO)
- PSC - NYC "Super Hudson" J-3a 4-6-4 1985 run (HO)
- Division Point - D&RGW 2-8-2 (HOn3)
- Hallmark - East Broad Top 2-6-2 (HOn3)
- PBL - Southern Pacific 4-6-0 (Sn3)

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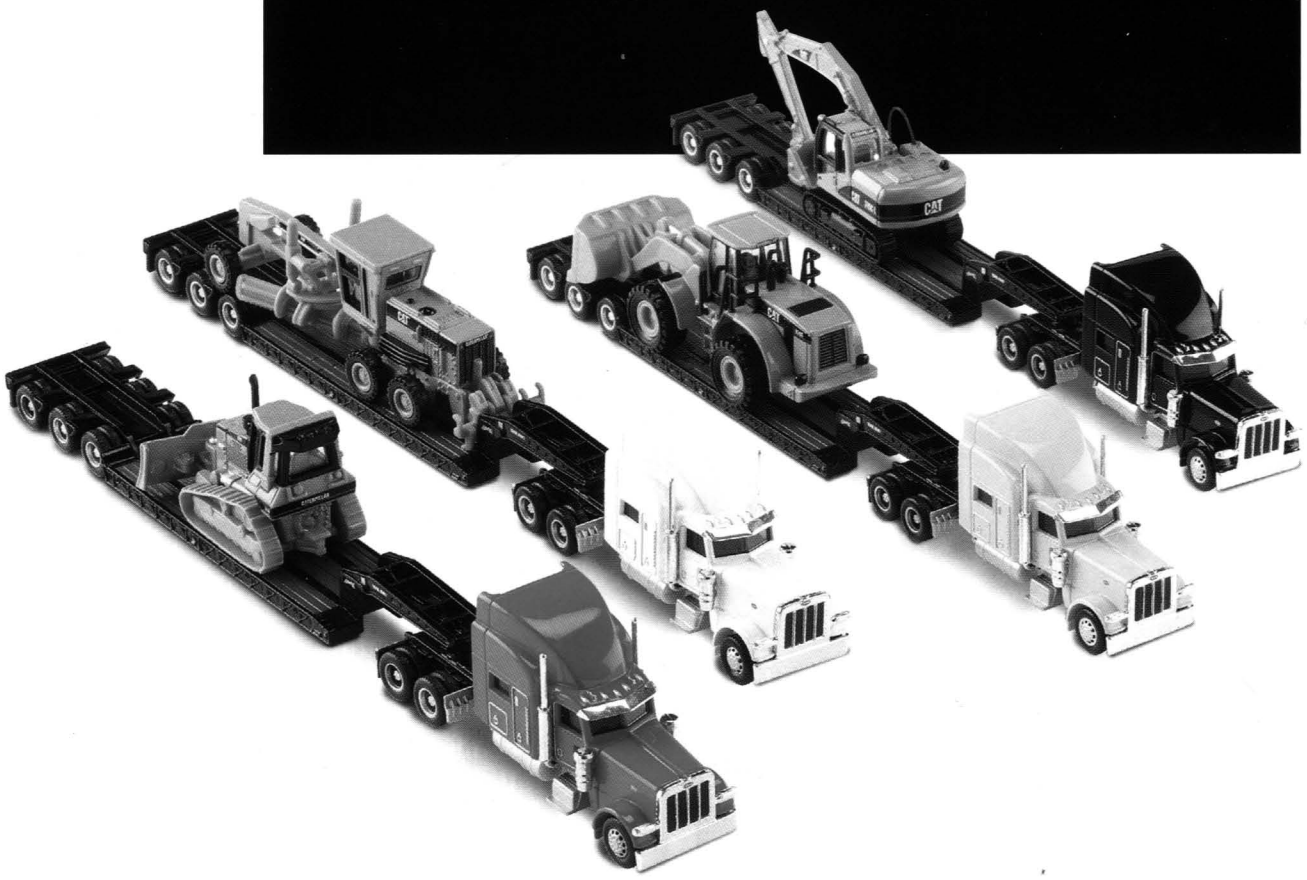

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These 3-foot gauge Gas Mechanicals were fondly considered "honorary" steam engines on the industrial lines on which they served because of the accompanying puffs of exhaust and their siderod and counterweight configuration.

Affectionate classification aside, there's no mistaking the quality of our Fn3 locomotive, modeled after a Davenport catalog design produced from 1937 to 1940. Visit your favorite hobby retailer to put this honorable locomotive in service on your layout and to learn more about our complete line of model railroading products. Bachmann Trains . . . Now that's the way to run a railroad!®

- DCC-ready with NMRA 8-pin socket
- heavy-duty can motor
- die-cast chassis (powered on both axles)
- die-cast metal siderods and counterweights
- LED headlight (constant lighting)
- removable hood for access to three-position polarity switch for conformance to NMRA standards or large scale model railroading practices, with a center "off" position
- smoke generator with on/off switch
- convenient lubrication port located on underside
- operating doors
- metal handrails and detail parts
- full cab interior with gauges, controls, brake stand, and seat
- die-cast knuckle couplers with operating cut levers
- offset shank couplers included separately for use with other popular brands of narrow gauge equipment
- designed for aftermarket sound installation

PAINTED, UNLETTERED
GREEN & BLACK
ITEM NO. 91395

PAINTED, UNLETTERED
YELLOW & BLACK
ITEM NO. 91396

PAINTED, UNLETTERED
SILVER & BLACK
ITEM NO. 91398

PAINTED, UNLETTERED
BLACK & YELLOW
ITEM NO. 91399

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